DH
DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Shah, Rahul spar over SIR in Lok Sabha

HM: They allege 'vote chori' as they can't win polls

Govt didn't answer any questions, says Cong leader

Page 10

IndiGo crisis: Court raps govt for delayed action

Delhi HC asks govt what it had been doing, seeks steps to compensate flyers

NEW DELHI, PTI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday questioned the Union government for not taking timely action to check the crisis caused by IndiGo flight cancellations and asked why the situation was allowed to precipitate, with lakhs of passengers stranded and other airlines charging hefty fares.

"The question is why, at all, this crisis arose and what have you been doing?" a bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said and directed the government and the airline to take steps to adequately compensate the affected persons.

The court asked the authorities if they were "helpless" or they could have taken action against IndiGo after it failed to implement Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules, including pilot rest rules, by November 1—which they blamed for the crisis.

It said that besides the trouble caused to the stranded passengers, the question is of the losses caused to the country's economy.

The bench also asked how other airlines could take advantage of the crisis and charge hefty sums from the passengers.

"The ticket which was available for Rs 5,000, the prices went up to Rs 30,000 to Rs 35,000. If there was a crisis, how could other airlines be permitted to take advantage? How can it (ticket price) go up to Rs 35,000 and Rs 39,000? How could other airlines start charging? It's like a pound of flesh, how could this happen," asked the bench.

▸ IndiGo, Page 6

DGCA to deploy officials at IndiGo office

The DGCA on Wednesday set up an eight-member oversight team to monitor activities of IndiGo. An order by the aviation regulator said the team will comprise eight senior captains. Two of them along with two government officials will be stationed at IndiGo's headquarters in Gurugram to monitor cancellation status, crew deployment, unplanned leave, and routes hit by staff shortages.

Details on Page 7

H-1B visa interviews of thousands cancelled to check online profiles

NEW DELHI, PTI

Pre-scheduled interviews of thousands of H-1B visa applicants slated for later this month in India have been abruptly postponed by several months apparently to scrutinise their social media posts and online profiles.

Some of the applicants, whose visa appointments were scheduled next week, have received e-mails informing that their interviews are being pushed back as late as May next year.

Rescheduling of interviews is for all applicants who were previously given appointments from December 15.

Most of them were already in India and are now unable to return to the US pending their new interview dates since they don't have a valid H-1B visa to travel back to the US.

Those whose interviews were scheduled for December 15 received emails postponing the date to March. Applicants whose appointments were scheduled for December 19 were given new dates in May.

The US embassy in India urged visa applicants not to come to the consular offices based on their previously scheduled interview date.

Applicants put out posts on social media sharing their ordeal. "My H-1B appointment got cancelled after I completed the biometrics, and was auto-rescheduled to April 30, 2026," said one applicant.

Houston-based immigration attorney Emily Neumann criticised the cancellations.

4 tiger cubs die at Mysuru rescue centre

MYSURU, DHNS: Four tiger cubs, rescued from an agricultural land in Hunsur taluk of Mysuru district have died at the Chamundi Wild Animals Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre of Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens (Mysuru Zoo) at Koorgalli.

The four cubs, aged around four to five months, were rescued on November 29 from Gowdanakatte village under the Hanagodu range of the Hunsur wildlife division.

Details on Page 4

Legal cover for family registry Kutumba

State's initiative helps fetch details without documents

SUJAY B M
BELAGAVI, DHNS

The Karnataka government has drafted a law giving statutory backing to Kutumba, a social registry under which households will have a unique identifier number.

"Every resident family of the State of Karnataka and each member of such a family, shall be entitled to obtain a Kutumba number by submitting information and photographs, in the manner as may be prescribed," the Bill states.

The Kutumba ID can be used to fetch data — caste, income, landholding and so on — to determine a citizen's eligibility for a government programme without having to submit documents.

The law empowers the government to make this unique number a prerequisite for citizens to avail services such as subsidy, benefit, service, certificate, licence or permit for disaster management, evidence-based planning and good governance.

The Bill seeks to establish Karnataka Kutumba (Access and Management) Authority Bill 2025 and provide security and confidentiality of citizen data. The authority is mandated to acquire, hold and dispose of property, both movable and immovable, as per provisions of this Bill.

▸ Kutumba, Page 6

HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFIER

What is Kutumba? It is a system with which govt aims to achieve suo motu delivery of benefits and services by checking entitlement and eligibility.

How is it different from Aadhaar? While Aadhaar is an individual identifier, Kutumba identifies a family and contains information about all registered members

What will it be used for? With Kutumba ID, details like caste, income, landholding, which are needed for various govt schemes, can be obtained without documents

What are rights of the number holder? The number holder has the right to obtain the summary of the personal data being processed by govt

Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways
Government of India
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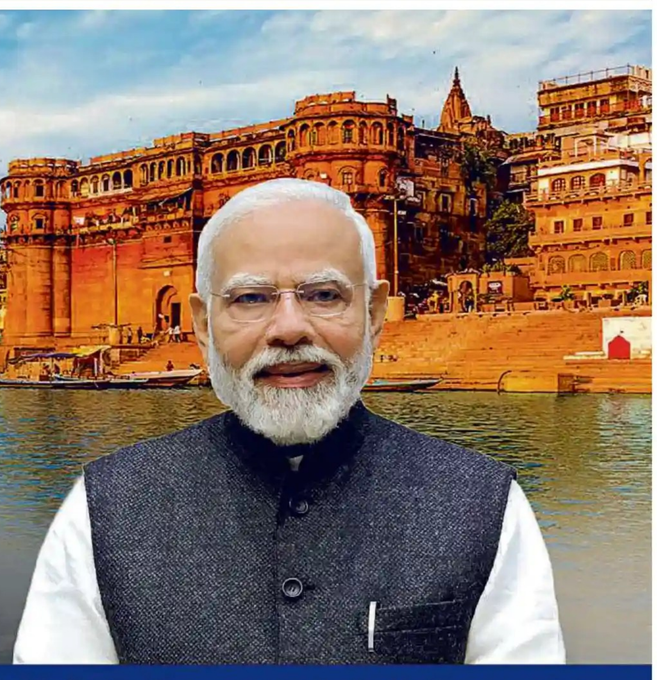

The revival of inland waterways in India is a new step towards economic development as it would ease traffic pressure on roads and help cut logistic costs.
Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister

A new way to travel on the Ganga
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Key Benefits
Noise-free travel — Peaceful rides for commuters & pilgrims
Less road congestion — Faster mobility through waterways
Pride for Varanasi — Among the world's first to adopt hydrogen-powered transport
Zero smoke, zero pollution — Only water as emission
Boost to Tourism & local jobs

Highlights of the Vessel
50-seater, fully air-conditioned
Runs 8 hours on hydrogen storage
Powered by indigenous technology
Safe, efficient, and eco-friendly
Speed - 7 to 9 knots

Flagging-off of Hydrogen Vessel for Commercial Operations by
SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL
Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

In the august presence of
Shri Shantanu Thakur — Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways
Shri Suresh Kumar Khanna — Finance and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Shri Dayashankar Singh — Transport Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Dr. Daya Shankar Mishra 'Dayalu' — Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ayush, Food Security and Drug Administration (MOS)
Shri Ravindra Jaiswal — Minister of State (Independent Charge) Stamp and Court Fee, Registration
Shri Awadhesh Singh — Member of Legislative Assembly
Shri Neelkanth Tiwari — Member of Legislative Assembly
Dr. Sunil Patel — Member of Legislative Assembly
Shri Saurabh Srivastava — Member of Legislative Assembly
Shri Anil Rajbhar — Member of Legislative Assembly
Shri Neel Ratan Singh — Member of Legislative Assembly
Shri Tribhuvan Ram — Member of Legislative Assembly
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December 11, 2025 Namo Ghat, Varanasi
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ANOTHER SCAM P 7

Polyester passed off as silk in Tirumala

After the fake ghee and Parakamani theft cases, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is embroiled in yet another controversy after an internal vigilance inquiry revealed that polyester shawls were allegedly passed off as silk for nearly a decade at the Tirumala temple.

LIGHTING UP P 10

Deepavali on Unesco intangible list

India's Deepavali was on Wednesday inscribed on Unesco's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, sparking celebrations on earning the coveted tag.

The decision was taken during a key meeting of Unesco being hosted at the Red Fort in Delhi.

BIG BOOST

Amazon to invest Rs 3L cr in India's AI space

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

A day after Microsoft announced Rs 1.55 lakh crore investment in India, e-commerce giant Amazon committed more than Rs 3.11 lakh crore ($35 billion) in India through 2030 across all businesses. The investments will focus on expanding AI capabilities, enhancing logistics infrastructure, supporting small business growth and creating jobs.

This commitment was announced at the sixth edition of the Amazon Smbhav Summit in New Delhi on Wednesday. This investment builds on the nearly $40 billion the company has invested in India so far.

An Economic Impact Report by Keystone Strategy highlighted Amazon as the largest foreign investor in India, the largest enabler of e-commerce exports, and among the top job creators in the country.

▸ Amazon, Page 6

Adani to invest Rs 12L cr by 2031

Ports-to-energy conglomerate Adani Group is all set to invest up to Rs 12 lakh crore in India in the next six years, chairman Gautam Adani said. The sizeable investments will be made in infrastructure, mining, renewable energy and ports, among others, he said.

IndiGo cancellations at KIA drop below 100 for first time in a week

BENGALURU, DHNS: For the first time in a week, IndiGo saw fewer than 100 cancellations at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) on Wednesday.

Despite claims of stabilised operations by the IndiGo CEO, KIA saw 62 cancellations until Wednesday evening. This included 36 arrivals and 26 departures.

With operations having been stabilised to a large extent, no particular sectors were impacted, shared an airport representative.

The airline did not witness any noticeable instances of passenger crowding throughout the day.

Communication from IndiGo's end has also got better, passengers said.

"We had a morning flight to Delhi, which was cancelled. Thankfully, we were told about the cancellations more than 12 hours in advance," said a passenger.

A well-placed source said the current cancellations have also been impacted by the ongoing discussions with the DGCA.

The DGCA has slashed Indigo's winter schedule by 10%. Bengaluru is likely to see more cancellations in the future, he said.

Until 7 pm on December 9, IndiGo had delivered 8,500 bags across the country.

A section of the bags remain undelivered due to faulty addresses.

Stray dog numbers triple as GBA hunts for shelter space

Survey: 3,000 stray dogs, shelter capacity just 1,000

BENGALURU, DHNS

Five corporations have been asked to find unused government properties that can be converted into temporary shelters for street dogs.

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) issued these instructions as it rushes to meet the Supreme Court mandate.

The GBA can shelter about 1,000 dogs, but its survey has found over 3,000 needing shelter as per the court's directive.

Last month, the court directed all states to remove stray dogs from educational institutions, hospitals, sports complexes, bus stands and railway stations, and relocate them to shelters after sterilisation and vaccination.

The GBA has issued notices to 2,637 institutions to provide stray dog numbers and prevent animal entry. The number of strays identified has risen from 2,206 on December 3 to over 3,000.

At a meeting chaired by Tushar Giri Nath, Additional Chief Commissioner of the Urban Development Department (UDD), GBA officials said existing shelters can house 1,000 stray dogs. The plan is to use existing, temporary, and permanent shelters.

For temporary arrangements, all five corporations must find unused buildings or vacant land suitable for housing dogs. The UDD has directed them to use Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd (KRIDL) to supply facilities under the 4(G) exemptions, despite KRIDL's history of sub-standard services.

Apex court orders say to clear stray dogs from public spaces and relocate them to shelters after sterilisation. DH FILE PHOTO

For permanent measures, the GBA has proposed new shelters at Ambedkar Nagar (Bengaluru North), S Bingipura (Bengaluru South), Animal Husbandry Department's super-speciality hospital premises in Cantonment (Bengaluru Central), Kottigepalya (Bengaluru West), and Sadamangala and Varthur (Bengaluru East).

This is in addition to 554 kennels and 13 community kennels already accommodating about 1,000 dogs.

P Suneel Kumar, Commissioner of Bengaluru North Corporation, said there are two observation centres in Dasarahalli and Yelahanka to accommodate stray dogs. "I visited a government property in Mavallipura to create a temporary shelter with minimum facilities until permanent shelters are ready," he said.

The GBA will submit an affidavit on its actions to the Supreme Court by December 20.

'Risk of cruelty'

Samyukta Hornad, founder of Praana Animal Foundation, warned that rushing to shelter dogs may lead to cruelty and disease.

"Before sending the dogs to shelters, it is important to sterilise and vaccinate them. The shelters should also have basic infrastructure, including fencing and monitoring the health of the dogs, so they do not spread diseases," she said.

"Dogs are territorial in nature. By keeping them in a shelter, there is a fear that it will lead to their slow death as we are dependent on the very system that did not make animal birth control (ABC) programme a success."

Yellow Line trains to run every 12 mins from Dec 22

BENGALURU, DHNS

Trains on the Yellow Line will likely run every 12 minutes from December 22 when the sixth train enters service.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) received the six-coach trainset in the last week of November.

The coaches were manufactured near Kolkata by Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) under a sub-contract with China's CRRC Nanjing Puzhen Co Ltd, which is supplying 36 trainsets for Rs 1,578 crore.

The sixth train needs to complete a 750-km mainline run, along with signalling interface tests, before entering passenger service.

A senior BMRCL official said plans were underway to induct the train on December 22, ahead of Christmas.

The sixth Yellow Line train at the Hebbagodi depot. FILE PHOTO

While peak-hour frequency will improve to about 12 minutes, the BMRCL may not advance the start of train services from the current 6 am.

At least one train may be kept aside as a traffic spare for emergencies, another official added.

The 19.15-km RV Road-Bommasandra metro corridor opened on August 11 and has pushed up daily ridership to over a million, but passengers are unhappy with low frequency and late start time. The current peak-hour frequency is 15 minutes.

HAL seeks nod to cut 155 trees

BENGALURU, DHNS: Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) has requested permission from the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to axe about 155 trees for the construction of vehicle parking space in its premises abutting Doddanekundi Road in Marathahalli.

The request has been made by deputy general manager (maintenance) of HAL's aerospace composites division. Some of the trees that are identified for axing include: Tora Matti, Green Bamboo, Nerale, Kari Jali, Akesiya, Sihi Hunuse, rain tree, etc.

On December 8, the GBA's tree officer, who is also the deputy conservator of forests (DCF), made the request public, inviting objections in 10 days.

As per the high court ruling, permission of the tree expert committee is mandatory for axing trees. The committee is expected to inspect the spot and see ways to reduce the number of trees that can be cut.

Activists allege ABC centres being misused to house dogs, raise concerns

Accuse authority of weakening birth control programme

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Animal welfare activists have written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over the alleged misuse of Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres in the city.

The December 8 letter from Citizens for Animal Birth Control was also sent to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh and Tushar Giri Nath, Additional Chief Secretary of Urban Development Department (UDD).

The letter stated that nearly 200 street dogs were being kept in six ABC centres for up to four months by the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA).

"The Supreme Court order clearly stated that the dogs should be picked up only once the shelters are ready. Instead, they have picked up about 184 street dogs and kept them at the ABC centres. As a result, the ABC programme, which is already weak, is impacted," Harini Raghavan, cofounder of Citizens for Animal Birth Control, told *DH*.

The letter stated, "As per ABC rules (Rule 2 (l)(d)), ABC partners are not shelters and are here only to carry out the ABC surgeries/rabies vaccination. Hence, they cannot hold any dogs outside what is defined in the ABC rules."

Nandita Subba Rao, cofounder, said resources and staff for ABC were being diverted to other initiatives such as feeding programme recce, street plays, rescues, and Kukur Tihar celebrations.

"All these are outside the ambit of the ABC rules of 2023, and hence, the ABC programme has been operating at sub-optimal levels. Street dog population is increasing as a result," she said.

Activists shared instances of dogs being picked up unlawfully.

"ABC is the only humane method of controlling animal population, which will eventually reduce the so-called man-animal conflict. There are many countries worldwide that have done this successfully.

"Within India, Goa has successfully carried out ABC. Karnataka, too, needs to focus on it as a priority," said Manjari Chaitanya, founder of South Bangalore Cares.

'Only following SC order'

GBA Special Commissioner Vikas Suralkar Kishor said, "We are only following the Supreme Court order. Some of the Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres, where there are community kennels and observation centres, we are keeping the dogs there for the time being. These dogs were brought in only from areas where there have been complaints about bites and conflict. The shelters are still in progress."

He urged activists to write to the Supreme Court if they disagree with the GBA's interpretation of the court order.

Shuttle bus service plan along ORR 'still on track', says Uber

BENGALURU, DHNS: Uber India chief said on Wednesday that the ride-hailing company was "very much" exploring plans to introduce a shuttle bus service in Bengaluru.

Prabhjeet Singh, president, Uber India and South Asia, described the Uber Shuttle service as a "viable and affordable" solution for "every large city".

"It is already live in Delhi and Kolkata, and a large percentage of our city commutes happens through Uber Shuttle," he said in response to a question from *DH* at a product launch in Bengaluru.

"As the tech multimodal capital, Bengaluru has a natural space for private players to offer shuttle bus services to complement whatever is already there in the public transport infrastructure. Those dialogues are underway. These are big shifts.

Prabhjeet Singh, president, Uber India and South Asia, with Minister Priyank Kharge. DH FILE PHOTO

These require ongoing dialogues to take along multiple stakeholders. I'm confident that there will be a window in the future where we will be able to bring that service to Bengaluru," he explained.

Uber had unveiled the service during the Bengaluru Tech Summit in November 2024, with Singh announcing plans to introducing it along the Outer Ring Road (ORR), notorious for traffic jams.

Uber Shuttle allows users to book seats on air-conditioned buses running on predetermined long-distance routes.

However, Karnataka has dismissed proposals to allow private city bus services.

In October, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy slammed BJP MP LS Tejasvi Surya and former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai, who had suggested ending the BMTC's monopoly and allowing private bus operators within the city.

Metro tickets on Uber

Namma Metro users can now buy QR code-based tickets and access real-time information within the Uber app and make payments via UPI. Uber has rolled out the feature in partnership with the union government's Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

BDA begins construction of railway underpass at Challaghatta

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has begun the work of constructing a railway underpass at Challaghatta, using box-pushing technique.

Once ready, the project will provide a seamless link between Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout and Mysuru Road. The work involves pushing 1,000-tonne precast concrete boxes beneath active railway tracks without disrupting train services.

This is part of the 11-km major arterial road (MAR) project, connecting Magadi Road and Mysuru Road, which is a shorter version of the peripheral road network that ultimately joins the proposed peripheral ring road.

Senior BDA officials called the project a complex and interesting engineering process.

"This is about making an 8-lane road to cross the railway tracks underneath at Challaghatta. A section of the railway line, where the road intersects it, is cut, which is equal to the width of the 8-lane road (4-lane width at a time).

"Once cut, it is removed by a huge crane and the ballast and soil under it are cleared. Then, new temporary railway tracks are mounted, making space for the huge concrete boxes to be pushed beneath," he said.

The project—implemented with the help of South Western Railway (SWR) officials — is expected to be completed in three months.

Work in progress using advanced box-pushing technique. PHOTO: BDA

Justice (Retd) Ashok B Hinchigeri with Christ (Deemed to be University) Yeshwantpur Campus Director Fr Benny Thomas, Dean Joby Thomas, Associate Dean Raghunandan G, HoD Vineeth Mohandas, UG Coordinator Jayesh MP, PG Coordinator Dr Bineetha P Bose, and SDG Cell Coordinator Savitha KL at the event.

Talk on democracy at Christ varsity

BENGALURU, DHNS: CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Yeshwantpur, organised a special talk on 'Strengthening Democracy: Understanding and Protecting Human Rights' by former high court judge Justice Ashok B Hinchigeri on Wednesday. He addressed human rights issues, global injustice and oppression with SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and institutions).

Central city corporation launches crackdown on illegal banners

BENGALURU, DHNS: A day after GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao instructed officials to remove illegal banners and flexes, the Bengaluru Central City Corporation, on Wednesday, conducted a drive to remove such hoardings.

Illegal banners and flexes were removed from Shanthala Nagar on Residency Road, Haridevpur Road, Cubbon Road, MG Road, Sirsi Circle, Siddapura Road, Hosur Main Road, VV Puram, Cubbonpet, Sajjan Rao Circle, Bannerghatta Road, Lalbagh Main Road, and surrounding areas.

Action taken as illegal flexes become an eyesore. DH FILE

Cleanliness drive

The corporation also conducted an intensive cleanliness drive in KR Market.

As part of the operation, tractors, JCBs, auto tippers and other mechanical equipment were deployed to clear silt deposits, unused household furniture, construction debris, waste materials and other garbage from major roads and frequently used public areas.

PV Quiz Championship: Bengaluru zonal round on Dec 15

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru zonal round of the Prajavani Quiz Championship will be held on December 15.

The venue is RV Auditorium, RV Teachers College, RV Road, Jayanagar 2nd Block.

Only students of classes 7 to 10 can participate.

Any number of teams can participate from one school, but there must be at least two members in a team.

Entry is free for all. Spot registrations begin at 9 am.

For more information, call 7338018541 between noon and 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

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WALK - IN - INTERVIEW

Ref.No.: F.13.49/KV/MEG/2025-26/ Date : 09.12.2025

Teachers are Required on Purely Part Time Contract basis for **PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya MEG & Center, Bangalore for the Academic Session 2025-26,** the Interview of the following posts will be conducted **on 17-12-2025.** The candidates should appear for interview at **PM SHRI KV MEG & Center** at their own cost along with Original and Photocopies of Certificates and Passport size Photograph. The registration for the posts will be done on the same day from 08:00 am to 10:00 am.

Date	Post	Subject
17.12.2025	PGTs	Political Science
	TGTs	English, Social Science, Science
	Miscellaneous Teachers	Counsellor, Art Teacher

Note : For Qualification and other details kindly visit the Website : **www.megcentre.kvs.ac.in.**

Sd/- PRINCIPAL, PM SHRI KV MEG & Centre

ASC CENTRE (NORTH) - 1 ATC BANGALORE

ALLOTMENT OF REGIMENTAL SHOPS
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

1. Sealed tenders are invited from interested War Widows/ Widows of defence personnel killed while on duty/ Disabled Soldiers/ Ex-servicemen & Spouses/ Widows of Ex-servicemen subject to license period of 01 Jan 2026 to 31 December 2026 (extendable to five years) with a three years cooling off/ break period etc for running a **E- Seva Kendra alongwith photo studio at ASC Centre (North) - 1 ATC, Agram Post, Bangalore-560007. EMD money - Rs. 50,000/-.**

2. Application forms and instructions for applicants can be collected by interested persons/ parties/ firms from Centre Account Branch, ASC Centre (North), Old Airport Road, Bangalore-560007, till **(1400 hours)** or upto three days from the date of publication of Tender Notice in Newspaper whichever is later. Queries be clarified from Account Officer on **Tele No - 97424 80753. (Email - workingforyou@gmail corn).**

3. Priority will be accorded to War Widows/ Widows of Defence Persons killed on duty for allotment. **Published by Account Officer for Commandant, ASC Centre (North), Domlur, Agram Post Office, Bengaluru- 560007.**

Date: 10.12.2025
Place: Bangalore

Sd/-
Account Officer,
ASC CENTRE- 1ATC

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221

E-Open Tender Notice No.: S/RWP/GeM/ Advt./E/2025-26/01 dated: 08.12.2025. Principal Chief Materials Manager / Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites online **"e-Open Tender"**, through Website **https://mkp.gem.gov.in/market** for supply of following Stores item at RWP/ Bela. The closing time of all tenders is **14:00 hrs. SN: 1. Tender No.: GeM/2025/ B/6960822, Short Description of item:** Ferro Silicon to Specn. No. RWP/M/ Specn.-1/ 004/2016 alt 'Nil'. **Quantity:** 800000 Kgs. **Date of Tender Closing/ Opening: 03/01/2026 at 14:00 Hrs./ 14:30 Hrs. 1.** Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is **https://mkp.gem.gov.in/market 2.** The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation with respect to the above tender.

for PCMM/RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt/2025-26/85

PROVISION OF 4 X 48 FIBER OFC FOR COMMUNICATION BACKBONE

Tender No.: N_01_HQ-2025-26; Dated: 08-12-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Name of Work :** Provision of 4 x 48 fiber OFC for communication backbone in section New Bongaigaon - Goalpara Town - Kamakhya (176 RKm) and Golakganj to Abhyapuri (84.84 RKm) of Rangiya Division under HUN6 sections. **Advertised Tender Value:**₹26,35,66,567.42/-; **Earnest Money**: ₹14,67,800/-; Date & time of **closing** of tender at **12:00** hrs. on **07-01-2026.** Complete information alongwith the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website **www.ireps.gov.in**

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Central city corporation launches crackdown on illegal banners

BENGALURU, DHNS: A day after GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao instructed officials to remove illegal banners and flexes, the Bengaluru Central City Corporation, on Wednesday, conducted a drive to remove such hoardings.

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QUIZ CHAMPIONSHIP
2025

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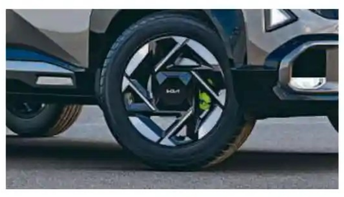
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FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: BENGALURU: NAARA KIA, J.P NAGAR, PH: 7406528200, KANAKAPURA ROAD, PH: 9071010099, **PPS KIA**, MYSORE ROAD, PH: 6309990010, **TAAPASI KIA,** KALYAN NAGAR, PH: 8095537777, KORAMANGALA, PH: 9071177333, **VST KIA,** PALACE CROSS, PH: 9606988123, YESHWANTHPUR, PH: 9606988124, **ADVAITH KIA,** LALBAGH ROAD, PH: 9611006006, BANASHANKARI, PH: 6364871022, MAGADI ROAD, PH: 6364871023, BASAVESHWARA NAGAR, PH: 6364871024, **EPITOME KIA,** AVALAHALLI, PH: 7022317666, WHITEFIELD, PH: 9606970216, YELAHANKA, PH: 7406343339, VARTHUR; PH: 9844240044, **JSP KIA,** HOSUR ROAD, PH: 9986644472, BELLANDUR, PH: 9513918131, SARJAPUR, PH: 8095553636, **BELGAUM: MIRACULUM KIA,** PH: 9090979761, **BAGALKOT: MIRACULUM KIA,** PH: 9090979761, **BELLARY: ATHENA KIA,** PH: 6364922832, **BIJAPUR: KUMAR KIA,** PH: 7022253887, **DAVANGERE: JANSI KIA,** PH: 9538018155, **GULBARGA: KUMAR KIA,** PH: 7022253884, **HASSAN: AADARSH KIA,** PH: 9606034050, **HUBLI: NAGSHANTI KIA,** AMARGOL, PH: 9148432469, GOKUL ROAD, PH: 8088752342, **KOLAR: EPITOME KIA,** PH: 8951903224, **RAICHUR: KUMAR KIA,** PH: 8123854311, **MANGALORE: ARM KIA,** PH: 9606013152, **ADVAITH KIA,** PH: 6364871025, **MANDYA: AADARSH KIA,** PH: 9606034070, **MYSORE: AADARSH KIA,** HUNSUR ROAD, PH: 9606034060, JLB ROAD, PH: 9606996680, **SHIMOGA: JANSI KIA,** PH: 9538416666, **TUMKUR: PPS KIA,** PH: 6303622210, **UDUPI: ARM KIA,** PH: 9606055296, **CHIKAMANGALUR: JANSI KIA,** PH: 9538416666, **CHITRADURGA: JANSI KIA,** PH: 9538416666, **KUSHALNAGAR: ARM KIA,** PH: 9606055314, **PUTTUR: ARM KIA,** PH: 9606048739, **SIRSI: NAGSHANTI KIA,** PH: 8088758724

INNOCEAN-064/25

Rs 48-lakh kidney damage case: Quack's associate arrested

Travelling quack duo sold harmful 'herbal' concoctions

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Jnanabharathi police have arrested the associate of a self-styled ayurvedic healer accused of cheating a techie of Rs 48 lakh by giving him so-called medicines that caused kidney damage, police officials said on Wednesday.

The arrested person is Manoj Singh Chitodiya, 29, a close associate of the prime suspect, Vijay Pradhan Chitodiya alias Vijay Guruji, 42. Both are residents of Maharashtra, but originally from Gujarat, the police said.

Police said the suspects changed their location every 15 to 30 days in the city and set up roadside tents to advertise so-called natural and ayurvedic treatments for sexual health and wellness.

"The suspects claim to be medical practitioners. It is false. We appeal to the public not to be trapped by such quacks," said Bengaluru City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh.

Last week, the police announced the arrest of Vijay Guruji from Mehabubnagar, Telangana. During interrogation, he confessed to involvement in the offence and revealed the identity of another accomplice.

Vijay forced the techie to buy herbal concoctions, including 'Devaraj Booti' and 'Devaraj Rasabooti', at exorbitant prices. The FIR registered on November 22 stated the victim purchased these concoctions for a total of Rs 48 lakh. The techie later discovered his kidneys had been damaged.

Manoj Singh was subsequently arrested in Chavallnagar, Cyberabad, Telangana. He also confessed to receiving money and cheating the complainant, the police said.

"During interrogation, both accused revealed that they had put up tents along roadsides in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and other parts of the country, cheating people by offering low-quality medicines for their health problems," the city police said in a statement.

During the investigation, police recovered 17 types of so-called ayurvedic medicines, Rs 19.50 lakh cash and impounded a tempo traveller used in the offence. "The seized goods have been sent for forensic examination," an official said.

City police to enforce strict checks ahead of NYE

Conduct inspections after Goa tragedy; safety & crowd control top priority

BENGALURU, DHNS

Seemant Kumar Singh

Following the Goa pub tragedy and ahead of New Year's Eve, the Bengaluru city police will enforce strict checks and joint inspections across pubs, bars and major commercial establishments, City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

After a high-level coordination meeting, Singh said the city police held an inter-departmental review with the fire and emergency services, excise department, GBA, BMTC, BMRCL, pollution control board, Bescom, and health department to streamline safety and crowd management.

"With regard to the Goa incident, we have asked the fire, excise and police departments and Bescom to conduct joint inspections of all pubs and bars. They must ensure that establishments comply with fire safety norms. Wherever norms are not met, notices will be issued and violations must be rectified before the New Year," Singh said.

He emphasised that law and order would be the top priority, especially as the number of revellers has been increasing.

"The scale could be bigger this time. We are going to enforce the rules in a strict manner so that no untoward incident happens," he said.

To manage the anticipated surge in crowds, police have asked the transport department to strengthen public transport options, such as running more buses late into the night. Metro timings and frequency are likely to be extended. BMTC buses, cabs and autorickshaws will be mobilised to ease public movement. The health department will deploy ambulances and medical kiosks at key locations.

A day earlier, Singh chaired a meeting with all DCPs, who presented plans for their respective divisions. More review meetings are planned at zonal levels. Traffic restrictions and entry and exit points to major commercial areas are being reviewed and finalised.

The police are also engaging with stakeholders at the DCP level. Meetings are underway with pub and hotel owners, performers' associations, bouncers and autorickshaw and cab unions.

"We have sufficient staff strength in all wings—law and order, traffic, and crime. Deployment will be done across the city," the top cop said, adding that he and senior officers will personally visit key locations in the days leading up to the celebrations.

Cabbie assaults BMTC driver over minor mishap

BENGALURU, DHNS: A cab driver abused and assaulted a BMTC bus driver near Hegde Nagar on Tuesday. But no case was filed as the driver declined to complain.

A senior police officer said the bus was operating on the Shivajinagar–Yelahanka route around 12.30 pm and the driver reportedly crashed against the cab while trying to overtake.

Enraged, the cab driver, identified as Narasimhaiah, allegedly chased the bus for nearly a kilometre before blocking its path and confronting the BMTC driver and conductor.

In a video recorded by passengers, the cab driver is seen hurling abuses at driver Nagesh and conductor Kenchappa. He also attacked Nagesh. The conductor repeatedly asked him to calm down and leave, but the assault continued, causing panic among passengers.

Sensing the situation could worsen, the bus driver diverted the vehicle to the Sampigehalli police station. "We have counselled both parties. Since the BMTC driver chose not to pursue the case, we could not register an FIR," the officer said.

Woman goes to police after losing Rs 4.5-lakh gold chain during X-ray at hospital

BENGALURU, DHNS

A 46-year-old woman has lodged a police complaint after allegedly losing her Rs 4.5-lakh gold chain during an X-ray procedure at a corporate hospital in Indiranagar.

Lakshmidevi, a resident of Chikkabanahalli, had taken her elder sister, Anasuyamma, to the hospital on December 2 for tests after she was diagnosed with a uterine tumour. As part of the evaluation, she was referred for an ECG and an X-ray.

During the X-ray, medical staff reportedly asked Anasuyamma to lift her gold chain to facilitate the scan.

After the tests, the women returned home around 5.20 pm, when Anasuyamma realised the chain was missing. Lakshmidevi contacted the hospital, but staff allegedly told her that no gold ornaments had been found on the premises.

In her police complaint, Lakshmidevi stated that the chain went missing during their time at the hospital and suspected theft.

She sought legal action and recovery of the jewellery, police said.

A senior police officer said CCTV footage confirmed that Anasuyamma was wearing the chain when she entered the X-ray room, but it was missing when she came out after the scan.

"At the time of the incident, only one nursing staff member and a patient were present near the X-ray room. We are verifying their roles, and further investigation is underway to identify the accused," the officer said.

Thief robbed by thieves; Rs 70-lakh valuables recovered

BENGALURU, DHNS: Avalahalli police arrested a 26-year-old burglar and a gang that robbed him shortly after he stole valuables from a gated villa community near Whitefield.

Police said the accused, Esai Raj alias Kunta, broke into a villa on November 22 and escaped with around 300 grams of gold jewellery.

The owner, who had just returned from Dharmasthala, had approached the police to file a case.

While fleeing through the Mandur crematorium area around 8 pm, Kunta was allegedly confronted by habitual offenders Mounesh Rao, Darshan Ali alias Appu, Chandan and Sunil, who robbed him of the stolen gold and extorted Rs 3,000. After being robbed, Kunta targeted two more houses in the locality and committed fresh thefts within 10 hours.

The police recovered 447 grams of gold and diamond jewellery worth Rs 70 lakh, besides Rs 28,000 cash. All the accused have been remanded in judicial custody.

Spoken Kannada classes

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Kannada Prasaara Parishat has started online spoken Kannada classes.

The Basic Spoken Kannada Class Batch-1, which began on November 2, will conclude in the second week of January. The classes are held on Fridays (7.30 pm to 9 pm) and Sundays (10.30 am to noon). Batch-2, which began on November 4, will end in the second week of January. The classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays (7.30 pm to 9 pm).

Contact BV Raghavan at 9448878569 for details.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Design Showcase: Organised by PES University; University Campus, RR Nagar; 10 am.

Conference: 'Save Public Education'; A Murigeppa, Allamaprabhu Bettadhooru, Indudhar Honnapura, and others to participate; Organised by AISEC; Bapu Auditorium, Gandhi Bhavan, Kumara Krupa Road; 10.30 am.

CULTURAL

Play: 'Buruki Vrata'; Directed by BV Venugopal; Organised by Udhbhava Kalavidharu; Nayana Auditorium, Kannada Bhavana, JC Road; 4.30 pm.

Music concert: 'Dasavani'; Soujanya S Aachar, Sai Tejas Chandrashekhar, and others to perform; Nanjangud Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Jayanagar; 5 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.0°C
Minimum	17.0°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	66%
Sunset (Dec 11)	5:54 pm
Sunrise (Dec 12)	6:31 am
Moonrise	11:23 pm
Moonset	11:21 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

Mobiles, sharp objects seized in Parappana Agrahara prison

BENGALURU, DHNS: A surprise check by officials at the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in Bengaluru on Tuesday has led to them finding 14 mobile phones and 10 sharp, knife-like objects.

Officials said the surprise checks were carried out between 8 pm and 8.45 pm.

Apart from the mobile phones and sharp objects, officials also found nine SIM cards, five mobile chargers, and two earphones.

An FIR has been registered at the Parappana Agrahara police station to identify who smuggled contraband inside, who aided it and who was using it.

"Between November 11 and December 10, six FIRs have been registered regarding the use of prohibited items inside the prison," a press release stated.

"Till December 9, officials seized 67 mobile phones, 14 chargers, 48 SIM cards, 10 earphones, Rs 64,880 cash, two packets of cigarettes, 60 grams of prohibited goods, and 13 sharp objects."

City police bust two drug networks; narcotics worth over Rs 5 crore seized

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru city police have busted two major narcotics networks, seizing drugs valued at more than Rs 5 crore.

In the first case, CCB officers seized 1 kg of MDMA worth Rs 2.2 crore and high-grade hydro ganja valued at Rs 2 crore within the Ashoknagar police station limits. Three accused—two foreign nationals and one Indian—have been arrested.

In a separate case, north division police seized around 1 kg of hydro ganja and 50 grams of MDMA, collectively valued at Rs 50 lakh. A gang of three has been arrested, and one vehicle has been seized.

Police said they have identified additional links in both networks and that further investigations are underway.

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S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Sr. DSTE/Chakradharpur, South Eastern Railway acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tenders against Tender No. mentioned below due to open on **30.12.2025** at **15.00 hrs.** Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Sl.No.**-1. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-88, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** S&T work in connection with TTR(TWS)-248 sets in Jaroli-Padapahar-Dangoaposi-Bolani Khadan-Gua Sections. **Tender Value:** ₹ 9,50,87,029.55. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 6,25,400. **Completion Period:** 18 (Eighteen) months. **Sl.No.**-2. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-89, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** S&T Works in connection with TRR(P) in Bondamunda Jn- Rourkela, Panposh-Jharsuguda Section. **Tender Value:** ₹ 81,85,985.52. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 1,63,700. **Completion Period:** 15 (Fifteen) months. **Sl.No.**-3. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-90, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** S&T work in connection with Provision of IBSS between Nuagaon and Bangurkela Station. **Tender Value:** ₹ 2,25,15,638.09. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 2,62,600. **Completion Period:** 15 (Fifteen) months. **Sl.No.**-4. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-91, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** Replacement of leftover Analog Axle Counter with Digital Axle counter over Chakradharpur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 3,97,43,381.71. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 3,48,700. **Completion Period:** 15 (Fifteen) months. **Sl.No.**-5. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-92, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** Provision Spare signal foundation in parallel to infringed signals along with Sacrificial mast to protect Signals. **Tender Value:** ₹ 1,92,01,134.24. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 2,46,000. **Completion Period:** 12 (Twelve) months. **Sl.No.**-6. **Tender Notice No.: ST-CKP-OT-25-26-93, Dated: 08.12.2025. Name of work:** Provision of (i) Dual Detection by Commissioning of Track circuit in Joint Line between Rajkharsawan-Rajkharsawan West/Outer. (ii)Auto Media Change over System for SSDACs & UFSBI over Chakradharpur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 2,04,32,611.90. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 2,52,200. **Completion Period:** 12 (Twelve) months. The tender details can be viewed at website **http://www.ireps.gov.in**. The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate in e-tendering. e-Tender forms shall be issued free of cost. **(PR-938)**

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ENGINEERING WORK

E-Tender Notice No: 09-Mech-BSP-LHB-NDT, Date: 05.12.2025. Name of Work: Contract for "Non-Destructive Testing (NDT)/Eddy Current Array (ECA) of LHB wheel sets at Coaching Depot Bilaspur for a period of two years on open tender basis." **Tender Value:** ₹ 58, 66,452.00 (₹ Fifty Eight Lakh Sixty-Six Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-two Only) (Inclusive of all expenditure and GST). **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 1,17,300/- (₹ One Lakh Seventeen Thousand Three Hundred Only).

Opening of Tender: 29.12.2025 at 17:30 Hours.

Further all details are available on Railway's website **www.ireps.gov.in.** Except E-tender no other mode of submission of tender will be accepted.

Sr. Coaching Depot Officer(JAG) CPR/10/533 *S.E.C.Rly.,Bilaspur.*

South East Central Railway @secrail

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/166/2025 Dated : 05-12-2025

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Bagalkot - Kudachi New BG Line Project : Proposed construction of staff quarters, TM rest house, Labour and Merchant rooms, Platforms, subway, FOB, PF Shelter, Drainage, Extension of RUB, laying and linking of one loop line and other miscellaneous works at Sulikeri, Khajjidoni and Lokapur Stations. (Composite Work) **(Tender Ref. No. BGK-KUD-49)**	Rs. 52,90,72,341/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 30-12-2025**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru Cantonment

PUB/717/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26

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CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

E-Tender Notice

Tender Notice No.: DLW-ISO-905-5S-2025. E-tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Sl. No.: [01]. Tender No.: DLW-ISO-905-5S-2025. Name of the work:** Recertification of 5S, Workplace Management system at Dankuni Loco Works,CLW along with 1st & 2nd annual surveillance audit and requisite training to the staff of this unit. **Tender value (Rupees): ₹1,26,998/-** (Rupees One Lakh Twenty-Six Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-eight only).**Cost of tender document (Rupees):** ₹5000.00. **Period of completion :** 36 (Thirty Six) months. **NOTE: (i)** Complete details can be seen in the Railways website **www.ireps.gov.in. (ii) Contact Number: 03212230003. (iii)** Date of closing of tender submission is 27/12/2025 at 11:30 hrs.

PR7/263 AEE/Plg./Dankuni

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SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. SBC-GSU-ENGG-2025-04

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following works.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Bengaluru Cantonment - Whitefield Quadrupling - Balance works of **(1)** Re-construction of Bridge No.835B FOB with Gangway-1 at ch:344876.000 & Gangway-2 at ch:344795.000 duly dismantling the existing FOB at ch:344886.750 in Baiyyappanahalli Yard. **(2).** Construction of FOB with Gangway at ch: 344487 in Baiyyappanahalli yard. **(3).** Dismantling and Reconstruction of platform shelter at Baiyyappanahalli yard.	Rs. 23,61,03,961.14

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 12-12-2025**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti, Bengaluru

PUB/727/AAS/PRB/SWR/2025-26

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CENTRAL RAILWAY

SOLAPUR DIVISION

VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT

DRM (S&T)'s Office, Central Railway, Solapur for and on behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from the capable, reputed firms/Contractors for the following works:- **Name of work with its locality:** Provision/shifting of telecom facility including FOIS network for development of various goods shed and changing room on Solapur division of Central Railway. **Tender No.:** SUR-N-T-2025-26-30 **Approximate Cost of the Work:** Rs.1,22,45,668.66 **Cost of the tender form:** NIL **Earnest money to be deposited:** Rs. 2,11,200.00 **Completion period of the work:** 8 Months **Date & Time of Closing of tender** on www.ireps.gov.in 29.12.2025 after 15.30 Hrs. The details are available in ireps website. Corrigendum/amendments if any will be uploaded only on above e-procurement website. Only online tenders will be accepted. Manual/ postal/e-mail, FAX, by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are requested to obtain Class III Digital Signature Certificate with company name and register the same with **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Payment of Earnest Money (EMD) will be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. For further details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**.

DRM S&T Branch, Central Railway, Solapur

Apex-084

अपने जानवरों को रेल लाइन से दूर रखे

CENTRAL RAILWAY

SOLAPUR DIVISION

Goods, Manufacture and Supply

Divisional Store Office Central Railway, Solapur for and on Behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from the capable, reputed firms/Contractors for the following works. **Tender No** : 96255645 **Description :** Goods, Manufacture and Supply of 1 Metre Long Fish Plate for 60kg (UIC)/60E1 rails confirming to RDSO Drg. No. T-5916 (Alt-Nil). Each set of 1 Metre Long Fish Plates comprises of (i) 1 Metre long Fish Plates with 6 holes to Drg. No. T-5916 - 02 Nos., (ii) Bolts and Nuts to Drg. No. T-1899 - 06 Nos., (iii) Single Coil Spring Washer to RDSO Drg. No. T-10773 - 06 Nos. Specification: IRS T-1-2021 (First Revision) with latest alterations if any up to date of tender closing. used will mean (Term-latest-wherever the alteration/amendments up to the actual date of closing of tender). **Quantity :** 3804 Set. **Earnest Money (INR)** : Rs.3,69,240.00 **Date & Time of Closing of Tender** on www.ireps.gov.in - 22-12-2025 after 11:30. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Apex/82 **Sr.DMM/SUR**

अपने जानवरों को रेल लाइन से दूर रखे

CENTRAL RAILWAY

SOLAPUR DIVISION

E-TENDER NOTICE

DRM (S&T)'s Office, Central Railway, Solapur for and on behalf of President of India invites online e-tenders on Railway's e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from the capable, reputed firms/Contractors for the following works:- **Name of work with its locality:** Signalling works in connection with provision of pedestrian subways in Solapur Division of Central Railway. **Tender No.**: SUR-N-T-2025-26-29 **Approximate Cost of the Work:** Rs.4,71,33,197.49 **Cost of the tender form:** NIL **Earnest money to be deposited:** Rs. 3,85,700 **Completion period of the work:** 12 Months **Date & Time of Closing of tender:** 29.12.2025 after 15.30 Hrs. The details are available in ireps website. Corrigendum/ amendments if any will be uploaded only on above e-procurement website. Only online tenders will be accepted. Manual/ postal/e-mail, FAX, by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are requested to obtain Class III Digital Signature Certificate with company name and register the same with **www.ireps.gov.in.** The Payment of Earnest Money (EMD) will be accepted through net banking or payment gateway or in the form of Bank Guarantee and the original Bank Guarantee should be delivered in person to the official nominated as indicated in the tender document before closing date for submission of bids (i.e. excluding the last date of submission of bids) For further details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in.**

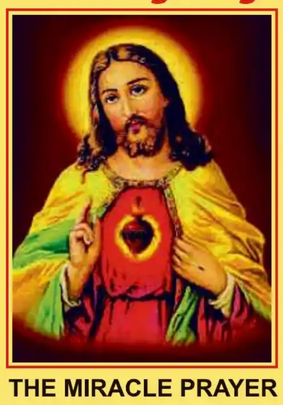
DRM S&T Branch, C.R. Solapur

Apex-083

अपने जानवरों को रेल लाइन से दूर रखे

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving



THE MIRACLE PRAYER

Dear heart of Jesus in the past I have asked many favours. This time I ask you this special one (mention favour). Take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your heart where your father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will become your own favour not mine. Amen, Say this prayer three times for three days and your favour will be granted. Never been known to fail. Must promise publication of prayer.

Nivedita and family

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
FIELD SURVEY DIVISION, ADVANCE PLANNING,
ROAD CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT
DUMKA JHARKHAND – 814101,Email ID:-eercdapfsddum-jhr@nic.in

CORRIGENDUM FOR CANCELLATION OF TENDER

Corrigendum for e-Tender Reference No: RCD/FSD/AP/DUM/10/2025-26, Dated-03.12.2025
PR 367594 Road(25-26)#D

Consultancy services for exploration of Feasibility report cum preparation of Detailed project report for construction of Elevated Road/Flyover from Khijuriya More to Nehru Park/Shivganga including its approaches ,replacement of culverts and bridges if any , proposal for new culverts and bridges if any , complete Land Acquisition Proposal including ownership details all complete as per latest guidelines, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Proposal , Forest Diversion Proposal if any with clearance of all stages etc. as required, at Deogharin the state of Jharkhand. Tentative Length -2.5 Km.

For the above mentioned tender with Reference No:**-RCD/FSD/AP/DUM/10/2025-26, Dated-03.12.2025** is hereby **CANCELLED** due to unavoidable reason.

Sd
Executive Engineer
Field Survey Division, Advance Planning
Road Construction Department, Dumka

PR 368162 Road(25-26).D

Government of Jharkhand
Department of Industries
Directorate of Industries, 3rd Floor, Nepal House, Doranda, Ranchi, Jharkhand-834002
Phone: +91 651 2491844, email: jhr-doi@nic.in

Tender Reference No. 2334 Dated: 10.12.2025

VERY SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Directorate of Industries, Department of Industries, Government of Jharkhand invites technical and financial proposals from reputed Agencies of national and international repute to work as Logistic Partner for the Visit of the High-Level Delegation from Jharkhand in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, 2026 Davos (Switzerland) and London (U.K.). The document can be downloaded from the website: https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app

Response to this tender shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of this document with full understanding of its implications. This section provides general information about the Issuer, important dates and addresses and the overall eligibility criteria for the parties.

NIT Details:

S. No.	Particulars	Details
1	RFP/Tender Availability	10.12.2025 by 18:00 Hours
2	Last date for receiving queries	12.12.2025 by 15:00 Hours
3	Response to queries	15.12.2025 by 15:00 Hours
4	Last date of Submission of RFP	17. 12.2025 by 15:00 Hours
5	Technical proposal opening	18.12.2025 at 15:00 Hours
6	Technical Presentation	19.12.2025 at 12:00 Hours
7	Financial Bid Opening	To be announced
8	Cost of Tender (Demand Draft)	Electronic transfer of INR 10,000/- (Non- Refundable) through Jharkhand Tender website **https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
9	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Electronic transfer of INR 1,00,000/- through Jharkhand Tender website - **https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app** The EMD is refundable to the Unsuccessful Bidder. EMD will be refunded to the successful bidder upon completion of the work.
10	Online Mode through e-Tender	**https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
11	Name and Address of Office inviting Tender	The Director, Directorate of Industries, Government of Jharkhand, 3 rd floor, Nepal House, Doranda, Ranchi, Jharkhand, Pin – 834002 Email- **jhr-doi@nic.in**

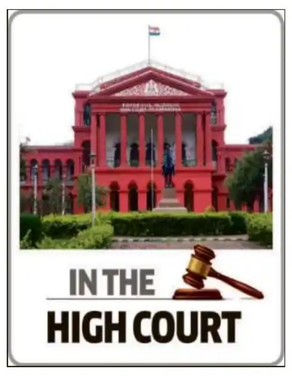
Note: 1. Proposals must be received not later than time, date and venue mentioned in the Fact Sheet. Proposals that are received after the deadline WILL NOT be considered in this procurement process.

Sd/-
Director Industries

PR 368238 INDUSTRIES (25-26)

B M Kaval forest: HC disposes govt's appeal

Says revenue dept will verify occupancy rights claim



BENGALURU, DHNS

A division bench of the Karnataka High Court on Wednesday disposed of the state government's appeal against the single-bench order directing revenue authorities to enter one MB Nemanna Gowda's name for 532 acres and 15 guntas of land at BM Kaval village in Kengeri-3 hobli, Bengaluru South taluk.

The bench of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Poonacha noted that it was for the revenue authorities concerned to examine whether the occupancy rights were indeed granted to Gowda in 1973.

In its writ appeal, the government contended that Gowda had filed a petition in the high court on August 13, 2025, seeking a direction to the tahsildar to enter his name in the RTCs for 532.15 acres as per an order of re-grant dated December 20, 1973.

On August 30, the single bench, on the first date of hearing and without providing an opportunity to file statement of objections, directed the tahsildar to verify the records, and if occupancy rights had been granted in favour of the petitioner, it was the bounden duty of the revenue authorities to enter his name in the revenue records.

Appearing for the state, Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty submitted that 1,382.18 acres of land in BM Kaval village was declared a state forest in preliminary and final notifications in 1933 and 1935, respectively.

He noted that BM Kaval was not a Jodi Inam village and therefore no application for grant of occupancy rights could have been entertained.

He further said that the documents relied upon by Gowda in his petition were, on their face, suspicious and forged.

He further informed the bench that Gowda was a habitual litigant/land grabber, who had filed numerous similar writ petitions claiming rights over 17,000 acres of forest land.

After perusing the single-judge order, the division bench noted that the single-bench direction was subject to the direction issued in the preceding paragraph, where it had directed the revenue authorities to verify whether the occupancy rights were issued in favour of Gowda.

Issues with electric buses damaging BMTC's image, says Minister Ramalinga Reddy

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Wednesday said that frequent cancellation of trips on the electric buses bought on gross cost contract (GCC) was damaging the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation's (BMTC) image, along with that of the state's capital.

Replying to query on the issue from Congress MLC Thippanna Kamakanur in the Council, Reddy said that cancellation of trips was three times higher in electric buses procured on GCC than on diesel buses.

"This has not only damaged BMTC's image, but also Bengaluru's reputation," the minister rued.

Reddy also expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct of drivers and buses of electric buses. "While the drivers lack training, the conductors' discipline leaves much to be desired. There are also a lot of technical issues with electric buses than with diesel buses," he added.

The likelihood of accidents is also higher with an electric bus, Reddy said. "The 5,423 diesel buses in the BMTC fleet make 65,000 trips daily, and the accident rate for one lakh kilometres is 0.05, but it is 0.07 for electric buses," the minister said.

The BMTC fleet boasts 1,221 non-AC electric buses. In the first six months of the 2025-26 financial year, 14,082 accidents involving these buses had been reported, of which 2,049 were owing to problems with steering, axles and electric motors, Reddy said.

The problem has been brought to the notice of Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy, said Reddy.

State can't orally summon, detain rowdy sheeters: HC

BENGALURU, DHNS: With no procedure prescribed in law to summon rowdy sheeters, the state cannot orally summon and detain them in police station for long hours as that will infringe on their personal liberty, the high court said in a recent judgement.

Justice R Nataraj observed this while partly allowing a petition filed by history sheeter Sunil alias Silent Sunil. The petitioner filed the petition in 2019 against IPS officer Alok Kumar, the then additional commissioner of police. Sunil is named an accused in 24 cases in several police stations in the city.

In April 2019, Central Crime Branch (CCB) officials orally asked him to be present at the office on April 12 to attend a rowdy parade being conducted by Alok Kumar.

According to the petitioner, Alok Kumar abused him and later caught hold of him by his ear and hair and pushed him around. After this incident, Sunil was repeatedly asked orally to visit the CCB office on four occasions.

According to the petitioner, there is no procedure either in Karnataka police manual or in Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, prescribing the manner of summoning a person whose name appears in the rowdy list.

He said there is neither any law nor procedure for conducting a rowdy parade, telecasting the same on public channels and printing details of such parades in the media.

Sunil claimed that he has reformed and is living a life of dignity with his family.

He said Alok Kumar's acts resulted in violation of the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution.

On the other hand, the additional government advocate admitted that there is no provision prescribing procedure for summoning a person whose name is entered in the rowdy register.

It was submitted that there are 6,540 rowdies in Bengaluru city and, it will be highly impracticable to follow procedure of issuing notices to rowdy sheeters.

Internal quota: Govt finalises Bill based on 6-6-5 formula

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The state government has finalised a Bill to ratify the 6-6-5 formula for internal reservation among Scheduled Castes.

The 6-6-5 formula has been challenged in the High Court by the Confederation of Untouchable Nomadic Communities of Karnataka.

The organisation has been demanding a separate 1% reservation for 59 nomadic, semi-nomadic and highly sensitive communities, as recommended by the Justice H N Nagamohan Das Commission.

The High Court has stayed final recruitment based on the government order implementing the formula.

According to sources in the Social Welfare Department, the Law Department has cleared the Bill, paving the way for it to be placed before the Cabinet.

The Bill is expected to be discussed in the Cabinet meeting on Thursday and may be tabled in the Legislature during the ongoing Winter Session.

Reduce customs duty on all immunotherapy drugs: MP

NEW DELHI, DHNS:: Bangalore Rural Lok Sabha BJP member C N Manjunath has urged the Centre to extend customs duty exemption to the remaining immunotherapy drugs as well, thereby making advanced cancer treatment more affordable.

Manjunath, who met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman here on Tuesday, said he conveyed his appreciation to the union government for its proactive decision to exempt 33 life-saving medicines from GST, a move that has brought significant relief to economically weaker sections of society.

During the meeting, Manjunath highlighted that only a limited number of cancer-related drugs are currently exempted from customs duty, while nearly 40 immunotherapy drugs used in treating various types of cancers are still not covered under the exemption. Since most of these medicines are imported, the overall cost of cancer treatment continues to remain high for patients, a statement said.

"Extend customs duty exemption to the remaining immunotherapy drugs as well, thereby making advanced cancer treatment more affordable, accessible and less burdensome for patients and their families, he said in his memorandum.

Centre's nod to procure of 9.67L MT of tur dal in state

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday said that the Centre had approved the procurement of 9.67 lakh metric tonnes of tur under the price support scheme.

"After his request, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan immediately approved procurement of tur dal in the state produced in the kharif season through NAFED and NCCF at minimum support price," Joshi said in a statement.

Tur growers in Karnataka were in distress as market prices had fallen below MSP.

A couple of days ago, Joshi had written to Chouhan, urging immediate procurement of tur under PSS.

Currently, the modal market price of tur ranges between Rs 5,830 and Rs 6,700 per quintal, while the MSP announced for the 2025-26 season is Rs 8,000 per quintal.

Since the market price is lower than MSP, farmers are facing severe hardships.

ई-प्रोक्योरमेन्ट सेल
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल, देवघर

ई–प्रोक्योरमेन्ट नोटिस

ई–टेन्डर रेफरेन्स नं0–BCD/EE/13/DEOGHAR/2025-26

दिनांक– 10.12.2025

1.	कार्य का नाम	Proposed Construction of Helipad -cum-Reception Building Karnkol at Mohanpur Block District Deoghar for the Year 2025-26
2.	प्राक्कलित राशि (रू0)	रू0 **2,04,10,300.00** (दो करोड़ चार लाख दस हजार तीन सौ सत्तर रूपये) मात्र।
3.	कार्य पूर्ण की अवधि	09 माह
4.	वेबसाईट पर निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	24.12.2025 11:00 बजे
5.	बिड प्राप्ति के लिए अन्तिम तिथि/समय	29.12.2025 11:00 बजे
6.	निविदा प्रकाशित करने वाले कार्यालय का नाम एवं पता	कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, भवन निर्माण विभाग भवन प्रमंडल, देवघर।
7.	निविदा खोलने की तिथि/समय एवं स्थान	30.12.2025 11:00 बजे नोडल पदाधिकारी, ई0 प्रोक्यूरमेंट सेल, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, भवन निर्माण विभाग, लाईन टैंक रोड, झारखण्ड, रॉची।
8.	प्रोक्योरमेन्ट पदाधिकारी का सम्पर्क संख्या	9162458095
9.	ई–प्रोक्योरमेन्ट सेल का हेल्पलाईन संख्या	6200167600

10. परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है तद्नुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
11. सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी एवं ई–गवर्नेंस विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार के आदेश ज्ञापांक 120 दिनांक 03.10.2023 के द्वारा निर्गत SOP (मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया) एवं भवन निर्माण विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार के पत्रांक 2229 दिनांक 06.10.2023 के आलोक में निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
12. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, SOP के तहत् अग्रधन की राशि उसीखाते में वापस होगी। अगर खाता बंद कर दिया जाता है जो उसकी संपूर्ण जवाबदेही निविदादाता की होगी। सरकार द्वारा निर्गत सभी अद्यतन परिपत्र लागू रहेंगे।
13. वैसे संवेदक/एजेन्सी जिनका विभागीय कार्य समानुपाति प्रगति पर नहीं है एवं एक साथ कई कार्य लंबित रखे है की निविदा विचारणीय नहीं होगा।

● अन्य किसी भी प्रकार की सूचना बदलाव *http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in* पर देखा जा सकता है।

Note:- UCAN Registration is mandatory for the Bidders.

नोडल पदाधिकारी ई – प्रोक्योरमेन्ट सेल
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,
भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमण्डल, देवघर।

PR.NO.368217
Building(25-26):D

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

The addition of Deepavali to the UNESCO Intangible Heritage List will contribute to the festival's global popularity even further.

~ Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

A PROUD AND JOYOUS MOMENT FOR EVERY INDIAN!

Deepavali

the celebration of light over darkness
has been officially inscribed as

UNESCO Intangible
Cultural Heritage Of Humanity

during the ongoing 20th Session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee
for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage at Red Fort in Delhi.

More than a festival, Deepavali is an emotion

A timeless union of faith, devotion & cultural diversity

Globally recognised for its deep message of prosperity, unity & new beginnings

It is India's 16th entry on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list,
strengthening the country's cultural footprint globally

Illuminated Ghats

Grand Processions

Cultural Showcase

CBC 09101/13/0029/2526

Alok Kumar promoted as DGP Prisons

BENGALURU, DHNS: Senior IPS officer Alok Kumar has been promoted to Director General of Police (DGP) and will head the Department of Prisons and Correctional Services.

Alok Kumar

The state government issued an order to this effect on Wednesday.

"Alok Kumar, IPS (KN:1994) Additional Director General of Police, Training, Bengaluru, is promoted to officiate in the grade of DGP carrying the pay scale of Level-16 in the pay matrix of IPS (Pay) Rules, 2016, with retrospective effect from 12.09.2025 and is posted with immediate effect and until further order as Director General of Police, Prisons and Correctional Services, Bengaluru, in the upgraded post," the government order read.

"The post of DGP, Prisons and Correctional Services, is declared equivalent in status and responsibilities to the cadre post of Director General of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, under rule 12 of IPS (Pay) Rules, 2016, as included in Schedule II to the said rules."

"B Dayananda, ADGP, Prisons and Correctional Services, is transferred with immediate effect and posted until further orders as ADGP, Training, Bengaluru, in the upgraded post."

PINING FOR BONFIRE

Outdoors out of question in early hrs as cold wave grips N-K

Bidar records lowest temperature at 9.2° C

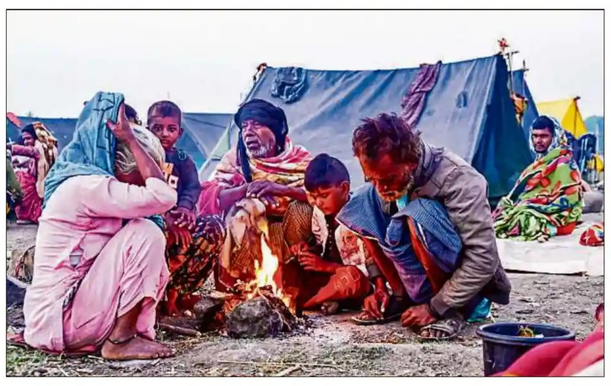
KALABURAGI, DHNS

Cold waves hit several districts of North Karnataka and Bidar recorded the lowest temperature of 9.2° Celsius this year on Wednesday.

Officials said temperature may dip up to 7° Celsius in next two weeks due to western disturbance and jet streams. Officials warned that the cold wave would cause health problems to people apart from triggering fungal diseases in plants.

The Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre has claimed that minimum temperatures are likely to be 4-6° Celsius below normal over north interior Karnataka region from Dec 10-15.

South interior Karnataka and Malnad districts are likely to experience minimum temperatures 4-6° Celsius below normal from Dec 12 to 15. This may result in cold wave to severe cold wave conditions in a few places in the region, it said.



Residents gather around a bonfire to protect themselves from severe cold in Kalaburagi on Wednesday morning. DH PHOTO/TAJUDDIN AZAD

People in most parts of Kalyana Karnataka (KK), including Kalaburagi, Bidar, Raichur and Koppal districts, have been compelled to stay indoors due to biting cold at night. The region saw minimum temperature of up to 14° Celsius. Village residents opted for bonfires to warm themselves up.

"We are already facing a cold wave from Wednesday and it is expected to continue for next six days. This will increase cardiovascular risks, respiratory infections and cold-related injuries. It will cause flower drop in plants and stunt crop growth. There will be further drop in temperature to below 7° Celsius till Dec 20," said Basavaraj Biradar, technical officer of the India meteorological department at agriculture research station, Bidar.

Ballari is recording 15° Celsius, while Vijayanagar is close to 14° Celsius.

Due to a dip in temperature, fog-covered weather conditions are already seen early morning, dropping visibility for vehicles.

Kalaburagi deputy commissioner Fouzia Tarannum has advised people to stay indoors as far as possible, minimise travel to prevent exposure to cold wind.

She suggested that people take hot beverages regularly and protect the elderly and children, apart from seeking medical attention if condition worsens.

Farmers are advised not to apply nutrients to soil during cold weather as plants cannot uptake it due to poor root activity.

They have been suggested to keep cattle inside sheds at night and provide dry bedding to protect them from cold apart from increasing protein levels, minerals in feed and keeping chicks warm by providing artificial lighting in poultry sheds.

Don't shift ferry point for jetty work: Residents

MANGALURU, DHNS: A majority of participants at the environmental public hearing regarding the dedicated jetty here for Lakshadweep objected to the proposal to shift the Kasaba Bengre passenger ferry point for the project.

They, however, urged authorities to expedite the work on the Lakshadweep jetty to help establish a sea trade route with the union territory. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Darshan H V.

Trawl Boat Association president Chethan Bengre said, once completed, the project would boost the region's economy. Kasaba Bengre Jamaat president Bilal Moideen said the area, with a population of 30,000, depended heavily on passenger ferry service to reach Mangaluru.

Around 7,000 people use the service daily for education, work and access to healthcare. Therefore, he said, ferry point should not be shifted 300 metres from current location. Such a move would delay access to Bunder and Mangaluru, more so in emergencies.

If ferry point is shifted, people will be forced to travel an additional km and new location lacks basic facilities, Toyyub, a resident, said. Increased operational costs would likely raise ferry fares, burdening the poor, he said.

Old M'lore port to get jetty for Lakshadweep at Rs 65 cr

MANGALURU, DHNS: A dedicated jetty for Lakshadweep with facilities for cargo and cruise terminal at old Mangalore port will come up at an estimated cost of Rs 65 crore under Sagarmala scheme of Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

The project has already received clearance of coastal regulatory zone and environmental clearance certificate is pending. It will have a 303.6-metre berth for cargo handling and 76-metre berth for passenger terminal. On waterfront, there will be 9,800 sq m for caargo berth & 6,000 sq m for passenger berth.

Construction of wharf for vessels and cargo will cost Rs 38.61 crore, passenger cruise lounge building Rs 53.6 crore, godown building with 1,000 MT capacity Rs 1.2 crore, dredging up to 7-metre depth at Rs 2.88 crore.

The cruise terminal will have passenger lounge, restaurants, toilets, security check-in, office room and shops.

24 tigers rescued in Mysuru division since October 15

4 housed at B'ghatta, 2 at Koorgalli, rest let into the wild

SHILPA P
MYSURU, DHNS

Two of the four tiger cubs that were rescued at Gowdanakatte in Hunsur taluk of Mysuru district in November. DH PHOTO

As many as 24 tigers, including five adult tigers and 19 cubs, were rescued in different operations in Mysuru Circle since October 15, following tiger attacks which resulted in three deaths and one injury.

Four cubs are housed at Bannerghatta centre and two adults are housed at Koorgalli. The rest are released to forests.

One adult and five cubs were rescued in Hunsur taluk in Hunsur wildlife division; one cub was rescued in Hunsur taluk in Nagarahole Tiger Reserve; three cubs were rescued in BRT; one adult and three cubs were rescued in Gundlupet taluk, under Bandipur; three adults and seven cubs were rescued under Bandipur.

Regarding the practice of rescuing cubs and human intervention, DCF, Mysuru territorial division, K Paramesha said they follow the standard operating procedure (SOP) to rescue cubs to deal with orphaned, abandoned or injured tiger cubs (and old/injured tigers), with detailed guidelines, including rearing protocols issued by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

Wildlife veterinarian Dr Ramesh said, "Abandoned tiger cubs will have no teeth to hunt and survive on their own till they turn two. Hence, they have to be rescued and hand-reared to ensure their survival."

Wildlife expert Sanjay Gubbi said it is extremely challenging to hand-rear large carnivores, especially on such a scale, in the absence of adequate infrastructure and trained personnel.

He stressed the need for greater investment in infrastructure and human resources, noting that such incidents are unlikely to be one-off cases.

He further underlined the importance of developing a long-term plan to manage spill-over tiger populations.

Sanjay Gubbi said notifying Kerti, Urti, Bisle, Moorkangudda and other reserved forests as protected areas, along with establishing new rescue centres in places such as Chikkanahalli State Forest and Yelwal Reserved Forest, should be taken up as a priority.

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PERSONAL

Announcements

I SYED Imran Ali demolishing a building and constructing a new house in New No. 7 old No. 1 in JC Nagar If anyone has any objections kindly contact me 9886811692 within 5 working days. EPID 5797682966

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
We, **Lokesh Kodanda Javeli** and **Arangam Neelima,** residing Sruthika Spring Fields APTS, E-111, 1st Floor, Emilia Block Vidyaranyapura Post Singapura Post, Bengaluru Urban- 560097, have changed our minor Son's name from **J. Hithesh** to **HITESH JAVELI** vide affidavit dated 02-12-2025 before notary G Dayananda, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Arvind Kumar** and **Arvind Kumar Sharma,** residing at No. 09, Sizzle SM Spring Field, Near Riches in Bar, Kammasandra Village,Bidarahalli Post, Bengaluru-560049, declare that the above names pertain to me only & henceforth I shall be known as **ARVIND KUMAR** vide affidavit dated 09-12-2025, before notary Uday Kumar K, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **SHAIKH SUBANI,** residing at No. 28, 3rd Floor, D Block, Dhobighat Quarters, L R Nagar, Viveknagar, Bengaluru-560047, have changed my name to **SHUBHAM BHOSALE** and my Religion from Muslim to Hindu vide affidavit dated 03.12.2025 before XXXVIII Addl. Chief Judical Magistrate, Bengaluru City.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **Thimmaiah A.K** Ex-Sub. Army No.JC60638, residing at Arvathokalu Village and Post, Ponnampet Taluk, Kodagu Dist, Karnataka-571213, have changed my spouse's name from **A.T. Muthamma** to **M.A. MUTHAMMA** in all the official records vide affidavit dated 10.11.2025 before Civil Judge and JMFC Ponnampet.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ALDRINO XAVIER TOSCANO,** residing at # 17, 8th Cross, 5th B Main, Near Shakthi Fresh, Sir M.V Nagar, Ramamurthy Nagar, Doorvaninagar Post, Bengaluru-560016, have changed my name to **ALDRINO TOSCANO** vide affidavit dated 10.12.2025 before notary L Gopalkrishna, Bengaluru.

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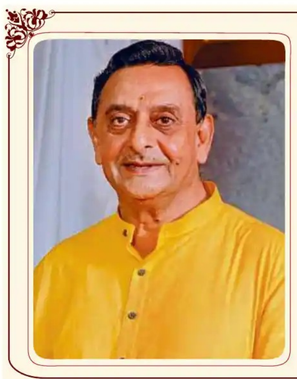

SAD DEMISE

K. R. KASHINATH

It is with profound grief we inform the passing away of the Head Master, New Oxford English School, 6th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore-560009.

From:
School Management, Staff & Students.

4 tiger cubs die of illness at Mysuru rescue centre

MYSURU, DHNS: Four tiger cubs, rescued from an agricultural land in Hunsur taluk of Mysuru district have died at the Chamundi Wild Animals Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre of Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens (Mysuru Zoo) at Koorgalli.

The cubs, aged around four to five months, were rescued on November 29 from Gowdanakatte village under the Hanagodu range of the Hunsur wildlife division. They were reunited with their mother, a 10–12-year-old tigress rescued earlier from the same area on November 27.

According to Hunsur wildlife division ACF N Lakshmikanth, one female cub died on December 1 due to cardiopulmonary failure and acute severe gastritis, while a male cub died on December 5 due to haemorrhagic gastroenteritis and encephalitis. Two female cubs subsequently died on December 7 and December 9 due to Feline Panleukopenia viral infection. The tigress remains healthy and is housed at the centre, Zoo executive director P Anusha said.

Earlier, two of the three tiger cubs rescued near BRT Reserve in October had also died.

On your 100th Birth Anniversary, we remember your love, lofty ideals & legacy

B.T. PARTHASARATHY
Former Advocate General
Beloved son of Smt and Sri B.T. Thimmarayappa
Fondly remembered by:
B.T. Family

Comments on Yakshagana artistes: Sunil Kumar seeks notice to KDA chief

BELAGAVI, DHNS: BJP's Karkala MLA V Sunil Kumar on Wednesday urged Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi to take action against Kannada Development Authority chairman Purushottam Bilimale for his statements about Yakshagana artistes.

The KDA chairman had recently said that 'homosexualty prevails among Yakshagana artistes.

Raising the issue during the calling attention motion, Kumar told Tangadagi, "Alongside art and talent, Yakshagana has a tinge of religiosity. The KDA chairperson has made a highly derogatory remark about Yakshagana artistes. What will happen to Yakshagana if KDA chairman has this attitude. What action have you taken against him?".

Responding to this, the minister said Bilimale had said it during a speech.

Tangadagi said he met Bilimale, who told him that he had expressed regret through media statements.

Though Kumar insisted that a notice should be issued, the minister said he had asked Bilimale not to speak thus in future.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client, Mr. P. Venkatesh, son of Late Sri Papanna, aged about 66 years, residing at No.44, Mahal Chowdadenahalli, Sarjapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka- 562125, Aadhaar No. 4230 4722 2420, has unfortunately lost the original registered documents relating to the immovable converted land having PID.No.150200102201021627, with Katha.No.2377/2377, issued by the Mugaluru Grama Panchayathi, comprised in the Sy.No.87/3 (old Sy.No.87/1) 02 Acres 02.08 Guntas and Sy.No.87/4 (old Sy.No.87/1) measuring 02 Acres 05 Guntas, totally measuring 04 Acres 07.08 Guntas, situated at Mahal Chowdadenahalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District. The lost documents are as follows:

Document Type	Date	Document Details
Sale Deed	23.08.1997	Doc. No. 2311/1997-98, registered at SRO Anekal.
Sale Deed	23.08.1997	Doc. No. 2312/1997-98, registered at SRO Anekal.
Sale Deed	06.09.1997	Doc. No. 2528/1997-98, registered at SRO Anekal.
Sale Deed	06.09.1997	Doc. No. 2529/1997-98, registered at SRO Anekal.
Confirmation Deed	23.12.2011	Doc. No. 4735/2011-12, registered at SRO Sarjapura.
Confirmation Deed	23.12.2011	Doc. No. 4734/2011-12, registered at SRO Sarjapura.

My client has also duly lodged a Complaint bearing E-Lost Report No.1933457/2025 dated:01/12/2025 before the Sarjapura Police Station, Bengaluru Rural, regarding the same. It is hereby informed to the general public that who so ever finds the above mentioned original registered documents may hand over the same to me in the below mentioned address. General Public are hereby warned that any transactions or dealings concerning the above-mentioned property, using these documents, shall be deemed invalid and shall not bind my client in any manner whatsoever.

Address: GOKUL KUMAR S O, ADVOCATE, No.350, 12th Main, Sector-5, HSR Layout, Bengaluru- 560102.
Mob: 8892595626. Email: ADGVK20@GMAIL.COM.

CHANNAPATNA CRAFTS PARK
Channapatna Crafts Park,
Sathnur Road, Thagachagere,
Channapatna-562160.
Phone: 8660584226 / 9591520007

INVITING QUOTATIONS FROM INTERIOR DESIGNERS / ARCHITECTS

The Channapatna Crafts Park intends to establish a Craft Based Resource Centre within the Park, to promote the crafts of Ramanagara, South Bangalore District. The Craft Based Resource Centre will include a retail section for all crafts, a library, a crafts demonstration and immersive experience centre and an incubation centre.

Offers are invited for conception, and visualization of space and for providing the detailed drawings and specifications of proposed interiors/ exteriors works.

Interested interior decorators/architects may inspect the building within **Channapatna Crafts Park, Sathnur Road, Thagachagere, Channapatna - 562160** or alternatively request soft copies of layout from the office of Channapatna Crafts Park at the address noted above. The total project cost is not expected to exceed **Rs.50 lakhs.** Offers and financial proposals in a sealed cover are to be submitted at the **Office of Channapatna Crafts Park on or before 10th January 2026.**

Sd/-
SECRETARY

CONNECT

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Govt tables Hate Speech Bill amid 'nays' by BJP in Assembly

Amendment to Drugs & Cosmetics Act among 11 others placed

BELAGAVI, DHNS

The Congress government introduced a Bill to fight hate speech amid protests by the Opposition BJP in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday.

The Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, 2025, was piloted by Home Minister G Parameshwara.

When Speaker U T Khader sought 'ayes' for tabling the Bill, BJP members shouted 'nay'. BJP's V Sunil Kumar even pressed for a division of votes. Khader, however, allowed the tabling of the Bill.

This signalled the BJP's intent to oppose the Bill or demand that it be given to a select committee.

As per the Bill, making 'hate speech' or circulating it will amount to committing 'hate crime', which will attract a minimum jail term of one year, extendable up to seven years, with a fine of Rs 50,000. Subsequent or repeat offences will attract 2- to 10-year jail term and a fine of Rs 1 lakh.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar told reporters later, "Hate speech (prevention) is part of the government agenda. You cannot allow hate speech. We have to maintain peace, law and order".

Drugs & Cosmetics Bill

The government tabled 11 more Bills, including one to amend the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Under the Bill, the government will give itself powers to carry out the functions of the Central Drugs Laboratory with prior approval of the Centre. It places the 'burden of proof' on persons from whose possession drugs and cosmetics are seized for misbranding or adulteration. It also makes offences non-bailable and introduces life imprisonment.

The Karnataka Labour Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill redefines 'establishments' as those having more than 10 employees, instead of 50.

The Chandraguthi Renukamba Kshetra Development Authority Bill, Male Mahadeswaraswami Kshetra Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, Chamundeshwari Kshetra Development Authority and Certain Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions & Charitable Endowments (Amendment) Bill, Karnataka State Universities (Second Amendment) Bill, Karnataka Cine & Cultural Activities (Welfare) (Amendment) Bill, Bayaluseeme Region Development Board (Amendment) Bill, Malenadu Region Development Board (Amendment) Bill and Karnataka Rent (Amendment) Bill were introduced.

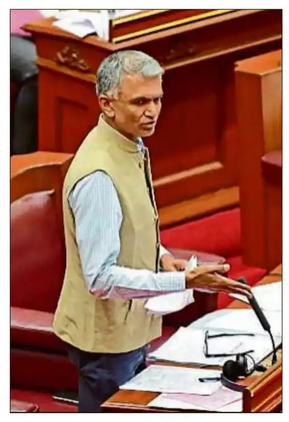
The government did not introduce the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle (Amendment) Bill, although it was listed. This Bill eases the procedure for the release of vehicles seized for illegal cattle transport.

Auto conversion of land use will be implemented soon: KBG

'Govt has brought in several amendments to simplify process'

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Wednesday informed the Legislative Council that the scheme allowing 'Auto Conversion' of land for commercial use would be implemented within a month.



Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda speaks in the Legislative Council on Wednesday.

Gowda, replying to a question on the subject by Congress MLC Ramoji Gowda, admitted to a delay in the issuance of the scheme's final notification, given that the draft notification had been given in September. "We have brought in several amendments to simplify the process of land conversion. We will issue the final notification for the Auto Conversion scheme within a month," said Gowda.

The scheme allows landowners to approach the planning authority directly as long as the property is being used for the purpose specified in the master plan. "As and when they approach the local planning authority, the land will be converted. Given that it takes three to four months for completing the process even under the 'Deemed Conversion' method, we have decided to stipulate a time limit of 30 days. The concerned Deputy Commissioner must verify the application and consider it within 15 days, with the provision for an additional 15 days to complete the task. On the 30th day from the date of the application's submission, the certificate of approval must be uploaded online," Gowda said.

The minister said that landowners needn't get their land converted if they were using it for renewable energy projects. "They will have to get the Energy Department's nod, and the system will reflect the land's conversion," he added.

Gowda further said that small-scale industries too need not go through the rigmarole of land conversion, and could instead seek direct approval. The Auto Conversion scheme would eliminate the need for middlemen, he added.

Revenue courts

The Congress government is ringing in amendments to rules concerning the functioning of revenue courts, Gowda told the Council. "There were no norms in the existing legislation on the functioning of revenue courts. We are introducing some rules, including one about how a 'formal inquiry' is to be defined," said the minister.

SESSION SIESTA

Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar takes a nap in the Legislative Council on Wednesday. Ministers G Parameshwara and N S Boseraju are seen. DH PHOTO/RANJU P

Let MLAs from N-K speak on region's issues: Yatnal

BELAGAVI, DHNS: Expelled BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal on Wednesday stormed into the Well of the Assembly, demanding that legislators from North Karnataka must talk about issues of the region, instead of others.

Turuvekere MLA M T Krishnappa, BJP state president B Y Vijayendra (Shikaripur MLA) and Arsikere MLA K M Shivalinge Gowda spoke about the issues of the region. When Gowda was speaking, Yatnal took exception, saying only leaders from other regions were speaking about North Karnataka, and that legislators from the region should be allowed to speak.

He went to the well of the House, protested and returned to his seat.

Congress members said Yatnal's actions were in reaction to his bete noire Vijayendra's detailed speech.

Yatnal is a vocal critic of Vijayendra and his father and former chief minister B S Yediyurappa.

Bifurcation has put fin burden on parent varsities: M C Sudhakar

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar on Wednesday informed the Legislative Council that the bifurcation of universities had caused a financial burden on parent universities.

As per details shared by the minister, some of the oldest universities, including the University of Mysore (UoM) and Karnatak University Dharwad (KUD) were struggling to pay retirement benefits to staff.

The minister was replying to the issue raised by BJP member Talwar Sabanna during Zero Hour.

Taking part in the debate, Sudhakar said UoM was in need of Rs 150 crore and KUD needed Rs 140 crore to settle retirement benefits of staff, including pensions.

"After bifurcation, a number of affiliated colleges were divided between the two universities. But assets and liabilities were not distributed scientifically," Sudhakar opined.

According to the minister, bifurcation of universities has affected parent universities more, as the responsibility of paying pensions of teaching and non-teaching staff remained with the parent university.

"Even revenue generation has declined for parent universities as the number of affiliated colleges has reduced after bifurcation," he added.

However, Sudhakar said that the Cabinet sub-committee headed by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, which was constituted to study the finances of state-run universities, would soon submit its final report.

"We have discussed the financial status of public universities in the Cabinet sub-committee. We have even found a solution for various issues the universities are facing and soon the final report will be submitted," the minister assured.

Sabanna shared details regarding Gulbarga University and said, "Of the 206 teaching staff, only 34 are working. At least 16 departments have no faculty members at all and 283 non-teaching posts are vacant".

A few universities, including UoM, recently approached the government seeking financial assistance to settle the retirement benefits of staff.

Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar has a word with Congress member M R Seetharam in the Legislative Council.

Funds for housing for poor to go up

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The government will increase funds provided under various housing schemes for the construction of houses for the poor.

Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan told the Council that the government had decided to increase it from Rs 1.2 lakh to Rs 3.5 lakh for general and Rs 4 lakh for SC/ST beneficiaries.

As informed by the minister, the announcement will be made in the next budget.

Replying to the question by Congress' K Shivakumar, the minister said the government was unable to allot a single house in the last three years as the construction of houses allotted already was still on.

The provided data showed there were 24 lakh homeless people in the rural areas of the state and the number was 13 lakh plus in urban areas.

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, 1st Floor,
Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052

No. DGM-1/BSWML/Tend/13/2025-26 Date: 08-12-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) (Through GOK KPP portal only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites tenders from Waste pickers/Waste pickers Association/Self Help Groups/Non-Government Organisations/C&T Contractors for the operation and maintenance of Dry Waste Collection Centers for a period of 5 years. The interested tenderers may submit their bid through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka viz. https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in the bid document. For other details refer bid document.

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **18.12.2025 upto 17.30 Hrs.** in KPP Portal (2) Pre bid meeting: **19.12.2025 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore (3) Last date for submission of the bids: **08.01.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs** (4) Date of opening of bid: **09.01.2026 after 16.30 Hrs.**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1
B.S.W.M.L. Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/4372/SSC/2025-26

ಶ್ರೀ ಜಯದೇವ ಹೃದ್ರೋಗ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಶೋಧನಾ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ
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SRI JAYADEVA INSTITUTE OF CARDIOVASCULAR SCIENCES & RESEARCH
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Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore – 560 069. Ph.: 080 22977278 Fax No.: 080 22977278
E-mail: director.sjicr@gmail.com Website: www.jayadevacardiology.com

Ref. No. SJICR/EST(1)/126/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025

NOTIFICATION FOR WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

The applications are invited from the eligible candidates to the below mentioned post at Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, Kalaburgi Branch.

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Pay Scale AICTE	No. of Posts	Classification	Age Limit
1	Professor of Cardiology	Rs. 1,44,200 - 2,18,200	01	GM - 01 (371J -KKR)	GM - 40 Yrs

Note:
(1) The details of eligibility, qualification, experience and application for the said post and Instructions can be seen in the website **www.jayadevacardiology.com.**
(2) The Walk-In-Interview will be conducted in the Board Room at 1st Floor, Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences & Research, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-69
The candidate appearing for the said post are required to attend Walk-In-Interview on **29.12.2025.** Candidates are informed to report by **9:30 a.m.** for verification of documents and attend the Interview at **12:00 p.m.** onwards up to **04:30 p.m.**

Sd/-,
DIRECTOR

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through kpp portal)

BWSSB invites tenders from registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-560 009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD Amount	Last date & time for receipt of tender	Date & time for opening of tender
1	West-1	BWSSB/EEW-1/ TO/PB/4913/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	Rs.76,90,873/- Rs.65,200/-	22.12.2025 upto 4.00 pm	23.12.2025 after 4.30 pm
2		BWSSB/EEW-1/ TO/PB/4913/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs.20,97,576/- Rs.50,000/-		
3			Rs.34,03,477/- Rs.68,100/-		
4			Rs.28,67,195/- Rs.28,700/-		
5			Rs.27,37,167/- Rs.54,800/-		
6			Rs.33,93,973/- Rs.67,900/-		
7			Rs.24,22,736/- Rs.50,000/-		
8			Rs.48,06,894/- Rs.96,200/-		
9			Rs.20,27,554/- Rs.50,000/-		
10		BWSSB/EEW-1/ TO/PB/4913/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	Rs.32,89,121/- Rs.32,900/-		
11		BWSSB/EEW-1/ TO/PB/4913/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	Rs.76,04,348/- Rs.76,100/-		
12		BWSSB/EEW-1/ TO/PB/4913/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs.26,69,750/- Rs.53,400/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (West-1)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/4341/AKAR/2025-26

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM-West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

Sl No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD (In Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	(WWM-V.V)-1	BWSSB/EE(WWM-V.V)-1/PB/ 1140/2025-26 Date: 08.12.2025	Rs. 15.28 Lakhs Rs. 58,700/-	18.12.2025 upto 5.00 PM	19.12.2025 at 5.30 PM
2		BWSSB/EE(WWM-V.V)-1/PB/ 1139/2025-26 Date: 08.12.2025	Rs. 19.89 Lakhs Rs. 58,700/-		
3		BWSSB/EE(WWM-V.V)-1/PB/ 1141/2025-26 Date: 08.12.2025	Rs. 27.24 Lakhs Rs. 64,500/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-V.V)-1

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

4	East-2	BWSSB/2025-26/WS/ WORK_INDENT2607/Call-2	Rs. 18,86,900/- Rs. 47,200/-	18.12.2025 at 4.00 PM	19.12.2025 at 4.00 PM

Sd/- Executive Engineer (East)-2

5	East-1	BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/3721/ 2025-26 Date: 05.12.2025	Rs. 38,69,374/- Rs. 77,400/-	24.12.2025 upto 4.00 PM	26.12.2025 After 5.00 PM

Sd/- Executive Engineer (East)-1

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

6	North-East	BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3357/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 23,63,697/- Rs.50,000/-	19.12.2025 upto 4.00 PM	20.12.2025 After 3.00 PM
7		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3358/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 10,77,840/- Rs. 28,000/-		
8		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3360/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 17,78,576/- Rs. 44,500/-		
9		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3361/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 22,44,594/- Rs. 50,000/-		
10		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3362/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 14,06,783/- Rs. 35,500/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3363/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 8,51,942/- Rs. 21,500/-		
12		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3364/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 15,59,159/- Rs. 39,000/-		
13		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3365/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 17,82,819/- Rs. 44,600/-		
14		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3366/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 34,36,936/- Rs. 70,000/-		
15		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3369/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 70,13,788/- Rs. 1,40,300/-	26.12.2025 upto 3.00 PM	27.12.2025 After 4.00 PM
16		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3368/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 61,82,638/- Rs. 1,24,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-East)

The detail regarding the tender & participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/4356/Zen/2025-26

ASSEMBLY SNIPPETS

Priyank, Thammaiah rue name gaffe

BENGALURU, DHNS: Clearly, Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge is no fan of Shakespeare's famous line, "What's in a name?". On Wednesday, Priyank addressed Chikkamagaluru MLA H D Thammaiah as 'Thimmaiah'. The MLA corrected the minister: "Because of this, everyone calls me Thimmaiah." An apologetic Priyank said, "Nobody better than me understands what it means to get a name wrong. With people calling me Priyanka, my gender gets changed."

Sound malfunction forces brief adjournment

BELAGAVI, DHNS: Speaker U T Khader was forced to adjourn the Assembly for 10 minutes following an unprecedented malfunction in the sound system on Wednesday. Microphones and speakers malfunctioned when Bills were being introduced. The mics went off soon after Khader chided Congress MLAs for not saying 'aye' during the tabling of Bills. This prompted Opposition BJP lawmakers to quip that Khader was 'silenced' for pulling up Congress members.

Bellad wears black band to Assembly

BELAGAVI, DHNS: Deputy Leader of the Opposition Arvind Bellad came to the Assembly on Wednesday wearing a black band on his left arm. Speaker U T Khader noticed this and asked Bellad about it. "It's a black day. It was a year ago that Lingayats were ill-treated," he said, referring to the lathicharging of Panchamasali-Lingayats during their agitation seeking Category-2A reservation. Bellad demanded to know what action the government had taken. Law Minister H K Patil read the rulebook and said such symbols were not allowed in the House. Bellad later removed the band.

BJP rakes up power tussle in Cong, says development hit

'No region can develop sans strong & decisive leadership'

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Power tussle between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar entered the Assembly's proceedings on Wednesday when Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka said political uncertainty over the top post was affecting the state's development.

Ashoka raked up the issue while concluding his debate on North Karnataka.

"North Karnataka development needs strong and decisive leadership. Without resolving the (leadership) issue, no region of the state can develop," Ashoka argued.

Siddaramaiah, who was present in the Assembly, chose to listen without reacting. Shivakumar was not present.

Ashoka pointed out that Congress MLC Channaraj Hattiholi identified Shivakumar as the CM in a social media post. He also referred to the "king is alive" statement by Urban Development Minister B S Suresha (Byrathi).

"Why are such statements being made? There's confusion in the state and it's affecting development. This must be resolved," Ashoka insisted.

Suresha intervened and maintained his position that Siddaramaiah and the Congress high command would decide on the leadership issue. "The CM and deputy CM are working like brothers," he said. BJP lawmakers roared with laughter.

Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge said the BJP saw five chief ministers in just two terms. "Didn't that affect development then?" he asked.

Congress MLAs H C Balakrishna, Belur Gopalakrishna and others hit back at the BJP for its internal camp wars.

Earlier, Ashoka launched a broadside against Siddaramaiah for 'failing' to keep promises made to North Karnataka. He demanded a White Paper on how many promises were fulfilled.

R ASHOKA
Leader of the Opposition

"There are at least eight ministers who barely visited north Karnataka. Bring in new ministers who'll work. Had you (CM) reviewed the performance of ministers after one year, you could have sacked the inefficient ones. But now, it's been two-and-a-half years.

"It was announced that Rs 900 crore would be provided for healthcare infrastructure in the Kalyana Karnataka region. Has this money been released?" Ashoka said.

Ashoka also demanded an audit of the money spent based on the two-decade-old D M Nanjundappa Committee report on regional inequalities. "Where did all the money go? Which contractor pocketed it?"

The BJP leader further went after Siddaramaiah for not hauling up his ministers.

"There are at least eight ministers who barely visited north Karnataka. Bring in new ministers who'll work. Had you reviewed the performance of ministers after one year, you could have sacked the inefficient ones. But now, it's been two-and-a-half years," he said.

Ashoka listed out departments that have not shown financial performance: RDPR (19%), Planning (19%), Urban Development (19%), Youth Empowerment & Sports (14%) and so on.

"Your government has reduced the minimum pass marks (in SSLC) to 33," he said. "Even then, your government has failed."

Congress member's comments against Horatti draw flak in Council

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The Legislative Council members across all parties on Wednesday condemned the statement by Congress MLC M Nagaraju Yadav against the Chairman of the House Basavaraj Horatti.

Taking up the issue during Zero Hour on Wednesday JD(S) member S L Bhoje Gowda stated, "We have also seen a viral video of a statement by one of the senior members of the House against the Chairman and also levelled corruption allegations. It should not be a culture or habit. We all must respect the Chair, irrespective of the person occupying the Chair."

Congress MLC Puttanna opined that it is a matter of concern and said, "We all should be cautious and serious while giving public statements. Such issues should not even be discussed inside the House. Let the chairman, deputy chairman and leader of the House discuss with the member."

BJP MLC C T Ravi mentioned that, every member should respect the Chair. "The member has all the rights to move no-confidence motion. He should not have made such statements," he added.

SOUDHA SPLENDOUR

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated a fountain in front of Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi, where winter session of legislature is underway, on Wednesday. DH PHOTO/RANJU P

IndiGo crisis: Delhi HC questions govt over delay...

IndiGo, from Page 1

The bench directed that by January 22, the next date of hearing, if the inquiry initiated by a committee into the disruption in flight operations over the past week is complete, its report should be submitted to the court in a sealed cover.

"We appreciate the steps taken by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the DGCA, but what bothers us is how such a situation was allowed to precipitate, leading to the stranding of lakhs of passengers unattended at airports across the country," the bench said.

The court was informed by counsel for the Union government and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) that the statutory mechanism was fully in place, and a show-cause notice was issued to IndiGo, which apologised profusely.

Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma, representing the ministry and DGCA, said the crisis was precipitated by various non-compliances with the guidelines issued by the authorities from time to time, including crew members' flight duty hours.

He said the unprecedented price surge has been controlled and capped, which had never been done before. He added that from time to time, the authorities have asked IndiGo for the timely implementation of Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) provisions.

To this, the bench said, "In case any airline failed to adhere, what is the provision available to you? Are you helpless? So you are expressing your inability. What action could you have taken against them for failure to adhere?"

The court, which was hearing a PIL seeking directions to the Centre to provide support and refunds to passengers affected by the cancellation of hundreds of flights by IndiGo, said these steps have been taken by the government once the crisis erupted.

Senior advocate Sandeep Sethi, representing IndiGo, informed the court that the crisis occurred on account of a multitude of factors, including unforeseen issues like technical glitches and adverse weather conditions in North India.

Blame game erupts over North Karnataka's problems

BELAGAVI, DHNS

A debate to discuss the many problems plaguing the North Karnataka descended into a political slugfest in the Legislative Council on Wednesday, with members of the ruling party and the opposition trading blame for the backwardness of the region.

However, members cutting across party lines acknowledged the need for comprehensive development of the region across irrigation, infrastructure, employment and several other sectors.

Minister for Minor Irrigation and Leader of the House N S Boseraju alleged that the Centre was not extending enough assistance to develop the Kalyana Karnataka region, which had been accorded special status under Article 371 (J).

He also found fault with the Centre for the failure to set up an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) centre in Raichur.

However, Chief Whip of the Opposition in the Council N Ravikumar cited findings from the Dr Nanjundappa report on regional imbalances to highlight the plight of constituencies represented by former chief ministers.

Meanwhile, former minister and senior BJP leader C T Ravi said that Congress MLAs elected from the region were prone to stay at their homes in Bengaluru, ignoring the problems of North Karnataka.

BJP MLC Hanumanth Nirani, who initiated the discussion, stressed the need for a medical college in each district of the region, besides calling for shifting government departments to North Karnataka.

He also underscored the importance of completing the third phase of the Upper Krishna Project (UKP), and called for linking the River Kali with the River Ghataprabha.

Silencing voices seeking separate statehood for the region was possible only if regional imbalance in development was addressed, he said.

Shashil Namoshi, meanwhile, said that, although relatively more developed than Kalyana Karnataka, Kittur Karnataka derived the benefits of the entire region's backwardness.

He also called for resolutions in both the Assembly and the Council demanding the establishment of AIIMS in Raichur. He also called for sending a delegation to the Centre to plead the state's case.

Ravikumar took exception to the fact that only three ministers and very few Congress members were present in the House during the discussion.

Vishwanath's take

Meanwhile, former minister and senior MLC Adagooru H Vishwanath said that the government schemes should be geared towards providing work to those willing to do so.

Vishwanath said, "If the money – more than Rs 1 lakh crore – spent on guarantee schemes had been used for completing the third phase of UKP, it would have helped farmers. I am not calling for the schemes to be stopped. But how have they contributed to the state's development? During his tenure as CM, S Bangarappa offered free power up to 10HP for irrigation pump-sets. We need schemes such as those."

Why hadn't a government college been set up in Davanagere, said Vishwanath, pointing to a 'private octopus' dominating the sector in the region.

"We politicians have become a hindrance to development. Politicians and officials are responsible for projects remaining incomplete," Vishwanath added.

Amazon to invest over Rs 3.11 L cr in India's AI space

Amazon, from Page 1

According to the Keystone report, Amazon has digitised over 12 million small businesses and enabled $20 billion in cumulative ecommerce exports, while supporting approximately 2.8 million direct, indirect, induced and seasonal jobs across industries in India in 2024.

This new investment commitment will focus on business expansion as well as 3 strategic pillars: AI-driven digitisation, export growth and job creation, it said.

"We have invested at scale in growing physical and digital infrastructure for small businesses in India, creating millions of jobs, and taking Made-in-India global. Looking ahead to 2030, we are excited to continue being a catalyst for India's growth, as we democratise access to AI for millions of Indians, and quadruple cumulative ecommerce exports enabled to $80 billion by 2030," Amazon Senior VP Emerging Markets Amit Agarwal said.

He said in 2030, Amazon businesses will support 3.8 million direct, indirect, induced and seasonal jobs.

By 2030, Amazon plans to bring benefits of AI to 15 million small businesses, with sellers on Amazon.in already using AI-powered tools like Seller Assistant, Next Gen Selling, and others, it said.

As Amazon Global Selling completes 10 years of operations, Amazon-enabled exports have surpassed $20 billion.

The company has set a goal of enabling $80 billion in cumulative ecommerce exports from India by 2030.

Govt's family registry Kutumba to get legal cover

Kutumba, from Page 1

The Chief Secretary will be the ex-officio chairperson of the authority.

According to the Bill, Kutumba system comprises social registry, integrated beneficiary management systems, beneficiary registry, payment platform and grievance redressal system and may include or exclude such other components as may be notified by the authority.

Eligibility criteria

According to the Bill, the state government, on the recommendation of the Authority, may, by notification, direct that the Kutumba number is a requirement for determining eligibility for any government subsidy, benefit or service.

However, if an applicant doesn't have a Kutumba number, but is otherwise eligible to receive subsidies, benefits, services, a certificate, licence or permit, the state government can order the verification of the person's data, which may even include an additional fee.

According to the Bill, the Kutumba number holder has the right to obtain information such as confirmation regarding whether the authority has processed or is processing personal data of the card holder, the purpose for which the personal data has been processed or shared with government agencies, the summary of the personal data being processed by the authority, the identities of all government entities with whom the Kutumba number holder's personal data has been shared and so on.

Kutumba was first rolled out in August 2019 as a pilot project in Srirangapatna taluk in Mandya district. Following its success, the project was extended to the entire state in May 2020.

The Basavaraj Bommai-led government had planned to draft a Bill to provide statutory backing to Kutumba in 2022 and had roped in the thinktank Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy to draft the Bill.

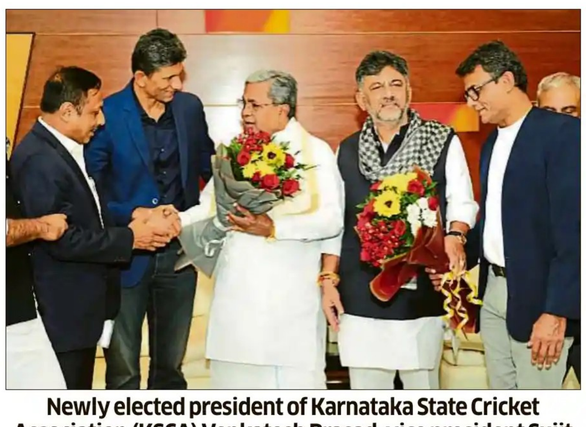
Panchamasali protesters' attempt to lay siege to Suvarna Soudha foiled

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The Belagavi police foiled the attempt by the members of the Panchamasali community to lay siege to Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, demanding reservation under the 2A category for the community. The police detained the protesters, including Panchamasali Peeth seer Basavajaya Mruthyunjaya and released them later.

Sporting black arm bands, the members of the Panchamasali community took out a 'silent' procession from Gandhi Bhavan. They blocked the road for over half an hour.

The police did not allow them to march to Suvarna Soudha. When the seer was bundled into a police van, the protesters raised slogans and they got into a verbal duel with the police, resulting in pushing and shoving.

Earlier, Bijapur City MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, addressing the protesters, launched a scathing attack on the Congress government over the police atrocities on the agitating Panchamasalis in front of Suvarna Soudha last year. The day is being observed as the Black Day for the police action on Panchamasalis.



Newly elected president of Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) Venkatesh Prasad, vice president Sujit Somasundar greet Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar, at the Circuit House in Belagavi on Wednesday. Former KSCA treasurer Vinay Mruthyunjaya is also seen.

Decision today on IPL matches at Chinnaswamy stadium

KSCA prez, office-bearers meet CM & DCM in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Wednesday said that a decision on allowing the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) to host international matches at M Chinnaswamy Stadium will be taken in a Cabinet meeting scheduled for Thursday.

"We have no intention of stopping the matches at Chinnaswamy Stadium. We will not disappoint the cricket fans. There is a need to initiate crowd control measures. Also, we have to incorporate the recommendations of the Michael D'Cunha committee in a phased manner. Even the KSCA president has agreed to it," Shivakumar told reporters after meeting the newly elected KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad and other office-bearers.

"We will not let any matches, including the IPL ties, be shifted out of Bengaluru. I have urged Prasad to put up united efforts to bring back the international matches to Bengaluru. The Congress government is committed to developing cricketing infrastructure, including building new stadiums," the deputy chief minister said.

Earlier in the day, the president of Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) Venkatesh Prasad and other office-bearers met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar here and urged them to allow the state cricket body to host IPL and international matches at Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Speaking to reporters after meeting the CM and the DyCM, Prasad said, "Chinnaswamy Stadium has not hosted marquee matches since a stampede outside the stadium that claimed 11 lives during the Royal Challengers Bangalore's IPL victory celebrations. We have convinced the CM and DCM that the KSCA had no involvement whatsoever in the incident. We have urged them to allow the KSCA to host international matches. The CM and his deputy have responded positively."

KSCA secretary Santosh Menon, vice-president Sujit Somasundar, Vinay Mruthyunjaya and Avinash Potdar were present.

Menstrual leave: Hearing of pleas put off to Jan 20

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has informed the Karnataka High Court that it is the first progressive state to implement the menstrual leave policy in the country.

Considering that the state government has filed its statement of objections, the court has posted to January 20, 2026, the hearing on a batch of petitions, challenging the November 20, 2025, notification, mandating industrial establishments registered under various laws to provide one-day paid menstrual leave per month to all permanent, contract, and outsourced women employees.

Justice Jyoti M noted that the issue cannot be decided on the first impression and that the matter required a detailed hearing.

During the hearing on Wednesday, Advocate General Shashikiran Shetty submitted that the government notification was issued after detailed deliberation and said that the policy was implemented after considering the suggestions/objections.

The statement of objections referred to the Apex Court direction in the petition filed by Shailendra Mani Tripathi.

The top court had observed that it is for the Union Government to frame a model policy in the matter, with a clarification that the observation would not stand in the way of any state government independently taking a decision, the state government submitted.

The court is hearing the petitions filed by the Bangalore Hotels' Association and other private managements, contending that there is already a comprehensive leave policy under various statutes mentioned in the notification.

The petitioners stated that there was no legislation supporting the notification, as the same is sought to be enforced by way of an executive order, which is impermissible.

WEATHER

Overview: Rainfall occurred at few places over South Interior Karnataka. Dry weather prevailed over Coastal and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast Dec 11: Rainfall to occur at few places over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	27.8	14	00
Bidar	27.6	9.2	00
Vijayapura	29	10	00
Dharwad	27.6	10	00
Haveri	28.2	14.2	00
Kalaburagi	32.3	15.6	00
Raichur	30.6	11	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	34.5	23.5	00
Karwar	35.2	22.4	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	33.8	22.9	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	15.2	00
Bengaluru	27.6	17.5	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	27.4	15.5	00
Davangere	29	12.5	00
Hassan	33.1	13.8	00
Mysuru	29	18	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	27.8	17.2	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	25.5	10	00
Kolkata	26.1	16.2	00
Mumbai	32.7	14.2	00
Chennai	30.7	23	00
Pune	29.9	8.4	00
Hyderabad	29.9	13.2	00
Th'puram	32.7	24.2	00

TROUBLE IN THE SKY: Oversight panel to track cancellations, refunds and crew deployment

DGCA sets up team to monitor IndiGo ops

NEW DELHI, DHNS

FLIGHT CHAOS

- IndiGo under regulator's watch after rostering chaos hits services
- 220 flights cancelled on Wednesday; Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai hit
- Airline CEO summoned; asked to submit report
- DGCA to carry out on-site inspections at 11 airports

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday set up an eight-member oversight team to monitor the activities of IndiGo as the beleaguered airline's services went into a tailspin over rostering norms.

The order by the regulator said that the oversight team will comprise eight senior captains. Two of the captains, along with two government officials, will be stationed at IndiGo's headquarters in Gurgaon to monitor cancellation status, crew deployment, unplanned leave and routes hit by staff shortages.

Both teams will submit a daily report to Joint Director General (Administration) Harish Kumar Vashishth and Joint Director General Jai Prakash Pandey by 6 pm.

The DGCA has also summoned IndiGo Chief Executive Officer Pieter Elbers on Thursday to submit a complete report, along with comprehensive data and updates, relating to the recent operational disruptions, a statement said.

At least 220 IndiGo flights were cancelled on Wednesday in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru. While 137 were cancelled at the Delhi airport, 61 services were cancelled in Bengaluru and 21 in Mumbai.

Senior DGCA officials will carry out immediate on-site inspections to assess IndiGo's operations across 11 domestic airports over the next few days and submit a comprehensive report to the Director of Operations for the flight safety department at the DGCA in New Delhi within 24 hours of their visit, the order said.

The personnel deployed at IndiGo's corporate office will monitor "cancellation status (domestic and international), refund status, on-time performance, compensation to passengers and baggage return", the DGCA order said.

The two captains deployed at IndiGo's corporate office will look into the airline's total fleet, average stage length, total number of pilots, network details, crew utilisation in hours, all unplanned leaves per day, flights per day and available crew, total number of sectors affected on account of crew shortage and standby crew per day per base.

The DGCA said it has decided to constitute the oversight team "in view of passenger inconvenience caused due to large-scale disruptions in the operations of IndiGo".

(*With PTI inputs*)

VIKRAM SINGH MEHTA
IndiGo Chairman

"On December 3, an unexpected chain of events led to large-scale flight cancellations ... Thousands of our passengers were left stranded ... I know how much distress this has caused. I want to say very simply and very clearly, we are sorry. The fair criticism is that the airline let you down. We owe answers to our customers, to our government, to our shareholders and, equally importantly, to our employees. We assure you that we will examine every aspect of what went wrong and we will learn from it.

Why we may never fly IndiGo again

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

My wife and I were waiting anxiously for December 3, the day we would finally meet our only son, who is pursuing his doctoral programme in Kozhikode.

Our tickets were booked with IndiGo. The evening flight was set to leave Patna at 6.35 pm, reach Hyderabad at 8.40 pm, and connect onwards to Kozhikode at 10.35 pm, landing at midnight.

A few hours before leaving home, we had received a message from IndiGo: "Thank you for completing your web check-in... We can't wait to welcome you on board."

Just before boarding a taxi to the airport, another message arrived: IndiGo had delayed the flight due to "operational reasons". Hours later, it was cancelled. After long queues, tickets were rebooked for December 4 via Chennai.

But December 4 proved no smoother. Scheduled to depart at 11.20 pm, the flight kept slipping until takeoff finally at 2.20 am. Relieved to be seated, we landed in Chennai at 4.50 am at Terminal 1, while their Kozhikode connection was at 5.50 am from Terminal 4. We had to sprint through security to make it.

Awake through the night, from waiting halls to dawn boarding, we prayed the journey would end without further hindrance.

The pleasure of meeting our son quickly dissolved when news broke that 400 flights had been cancelled, with thousands stranded.

On Dec 7, a day before our return, our worst fear arrived as a message: "We regret to inform you that your flight is cancelled due to operational reasons."

Our tickets were shifted to the next day. An extra day meant added expenses for accommodation and food. But in the chaos — passengers crying, shouting, scrambling for seats, and paying astronomical fares — who was counting anymore?

The next day, another message arrived: our Dec 9 IndiGo flight to Patna was cancelled. No alternatives offered — only a promise of refund within five days.

Eventually, we purchased an Air India Express ticket via Bengaluru at a steep premium. The only relief: after multiple cancellations, sleepless waits and stress, we finally made it home.

Parliamentary panel to grill IndiGo, aviation officials on December 17

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A Parliamentary Standing Committee meeting on December 17 to discuss the IndiGo crisis is expected to ask the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) about their monitoring of the rollout of the new rostering norms, even as the issue again echoed in Parliament with an MP claiming that the cap on airfare is not being adhered to by airlines.

Sources said the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, headed by a senior JD(U) MP, will question IndiGo officials on how its services collapsed despite the airline having sufficient time to implement the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms.

At the same time, sources said the panel is also likely to ask the Ministry and the DGCA how they allowed the crisis to escalate, and to explain how their monitoring mechanisms failed to anticipate the situation, as the airline alone could not be held responsible for the developments.

The panel also will examine other developments, including GPS spoofing. AFP

Sources said that besides the IndiGo crisis, the panel will also examine other developments in the sector, including GPS spoofing and interference incidents reported from airports. Officials of the Airports Authority of India have also been summoned for the meeting.

In the Rajya Sabha, CPM lawmaker A A Rahim referred to the capping of airfare following the IndiGo crisis and said that he had attempted to book a Delhi–Thiruvananthapuram ticket for Thursday, which was costing an "absolutely shocking" Rs 64,783 for an economy-class seat. He said the cap for air travel above 1,500 km for an economy-class ticket is Rs 18,000.

"The government propagated the idea that the privatisation of Air India would create a miracle, but what is the reality today? In terms of safety, quality of service and quality of aircraft, the situation is extremely poor. The government has created a perception that the public sector is useless. What is Tata-led Air India doing during this so-called IndiGo crisis? It is profiting from human distress," he said, referring to his experience of booking a ticket.

Key Sandeshkhali witness injured in accident; son, driver killed

BARASAT, PTI: Bholanath Ghosh, one of the prime witnesses in the attack on ED officials in Sandeshkhali and connected CBI cases which implicated now-jailed TMC leader Sheikh Shahjahan, was injured when a truck collided with his car in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district on Wednesday, a senior officer said.

Ghosh's younger son, Satyajit (32), and the car's driver, Sahanur Molla (27), were killed in the accident on the Basanti Highway, police said.

The 16-wheel truck dragged the private vehicle and dumped it into a water body adjacent to the road, the officer said. The truck was found dangling over the edge, while its driver fled.

"I was sitting next to the driver, and my son was seated behind him. The truck came and hit our car at full speed on its right side. I cannot say anything more except that this wasn't an accident," the survivor said.

Ghosh and his son were travelling from their Sandeshkhali home to the Basirhat sub-divisional court for a case filed by Shahjahan when the crash occurred around 8.45 am on a CCTV-blind stretch. Local eyewitnesses said the truck, coming from the opposite direction, jumped lanes and rammed the car at high speed before dragging it into the water body.

Ghosh's elder son, Biswajit, alleged that Shahjahan pulled strings sitting in jail.

New scam rocks TTD: For years, polyester shawls passed off as silk

HYDERABAD, DHNS

After the fake ghee and Parakamani theft cases, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is embroiled in yet another controversy after an internal vigilance inquiry revealed that polyester shawls were allegedly passed off as silk for nearly a decade at the Tirumala temple.

According to the inquiry findings, the TTD paid around Rs 54 crore over the past 10 years to a single vendor for supplying Pattu Sariga Duppatas (silk shawls) used to honour donors, as part of the temple's long-standing tradition.

On September 16, the TTD Board, after getting a whiff of the irregularity, had directed the Chief Vigilance and Security Officer (CVSO) to conduct a detailed inquiry into the quality of the shawls supplied under existing agreements and submit a report for the board's consideration.

Enquiry shows TTD paid Rs 54 cr over the past 10 years to a single vendor.

Following this, the vigilance officials collected samples from two locations — the fresh stock at the warehouse godown in Tirupati and approved samples available at the Vaibhavotsava Mandapam in Tirumala. A set of two samples each was sent to the Central Silk Board (CSB) laboratories in Bengaluru and Dharmavaram for scientific analysis and quality checks. The test results from both centres confirmed that the fabric composition was polyester × polyester, not silk × silk as specified in the tender.

These findings conclusively established that the shawls were not made of silk, contrary to the supplier's contractual claim.

Records show that the TTD had awarded the contract for the procurement of 15,000 silk shawls at a rate of Rs 1,389.15 per piece to a single supplier. Notably, samples from the same consignment had earlier been approved by the CSB office in Kancheepuram, while identical samples tested at the Bengaluru and Dharmavaram CSB laboratories failed the quality test.

The vigilance report hinted at possible foul play, observing that the sample sent by TTD warehouse officials may have been substituted or that the approval process at the Kancheepuram laboratory might have been influenced. The report was recently placed before the TTD Board, which has now requested the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to conduct a detailed investigation into the alleged procurement scam.

"The fresh stock samples from the warehouse godown, Tirupati (2 Nos) and the approved samples from Vaibhavotsava Mandapam, Tirumala (02 Nos) were both supplied by M/s VRS Export, Nagari" the TTD Board's note file, seen by *DH*, said.

'Concerts in India unsafe for women': Briton's viral post

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

A travel influencer based in Bangkok alleged that she and her female friend faced sexual harassment as "men touched them without consent" during American singer Post Malone's concert in Guwahati on Monday.

With the caption 'Concerts in India are not safe for women', she wrote, "As two women in the crowd, both my friend and I were touched without consent within minutes of entering the packed area. After just 10 minutes, we had to force our way out and move to the back near the vendors because we no longer felt safe. Sadly, because of what happened, we were no longer able to enjoy the concert."

The concert, Malone's first in India, drew a crowd of over 20,000 at a ground owned by the Assam government. The event came weeks after the Assam Cabinet decided to promote concert tourism.

As the post alleging sexual harassment went viral, police said that they were trying to "do the needful". However, they said the British influencer did not lodge complaint or seek help from the personnel deployed at the concert.

"No concert, no matter how big, should make women choose between enjoying the music and guarding their bodies," the influencer, with over 76,000 followers, wrote.

GOVT OF KARNATAKA
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No. ITI/MNG/PPP/e-Pro/CR-01/2025-26 Date: 09-12-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER

The secretary of IMC, Govt ITI Mangalore Grama invites tenders for Procurement of Electrician Lab Setup & Supply of Tools, Equipment's and Machineries from the eligible bidders as per bid document on https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in two cover tender procedure as per KTPP act. e-proc. Indent No. is DET/2025-26/IND0052. Last date and time for receipt for Tenders 07-01-2026 at 5:00 pm. The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website. For any changes either in tender date or any other condition, Tenderers can view in the Portal and no separate notification will be published in news paper.

Sd/- Secretary IMC
GITI Mangalore Grama

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
No.8, "Samparka Soudha", Dr. Rajkumar Road,
Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Telephone : 080-22024000
e-mail : mdkrdcl@gmail.com Website: http://www.krdcl.in

No: KRDCL/IFB/Company Secretary/2025-26/2926 Date:11-12-2025

Notification for the post of Company Secretary

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Ltd is a Govt of Karnataka Undertaking, here by issues this notification **for the post of Company Secretary,** in accordance with the provisions of the Company Act-2013 and with the approval of the Competent Authority. The Company is looking for high profile, dynamic, result oriented and innovative candidate for the post of Company Secretary. The details are as follows:

Post	**Company Secretary (on Contract basis)**
No. of Post	One
Duration of Service	Three Years.
Place of Work	Head Office, Bengaluru
Maximum Age	55 Years
Qualification	Degree with ACS Certificate, Membership of Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), preferably Law Graduate.
Language	Writing & Reading in Kannada & English is Mandatory.
Experience	Minimum 3 to 5 Years in the relevant field and preferablly work with Govt. Departments/ Board/Corporation/PSU's
Consolidate Monthly Pay	Rs.90,000.00+ Conveyance allowance
Last date for submission of application with details	Submit the application along with experience details, Qualifications, Certificates, ID & Address Proof & ICSI Membership Certificate copies **on or before 18-12-2025,** By physical or mail (During Office hours),
Postal Adderss & Contact No.	Managing Director, No.08, "Samparka Soudha", 3rd Floor, Dr.Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560 010 080-22024000.
e-mail	mdkrdcl@gmail.com

Sd/- Managing Director
KRDCL, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/YC/4351/2025-26

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN - UO4010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

BESCOM invites tender against Enquiry No. BESCOM/2025-26/INDO187 for Procurement of 11 kV, 200 Amps Single Break GOS. Bid Documents available from: 12.12.2025 onwards. Last date for Bid Submission: 12.01.2026, 17:00 Hrs. Opening of Bid Document: 13.01.2026, 17:15 Hrs. The Tender can be obtained through KPP portal web-site http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP help desk contact numbers (+91-8046010000 +91-8068948777, 09240214000 & 09240214001) or email at support@eprochelpdesk.com

Sd/- Chief General Manager, Ele., Procurement,
BESCOM, 4th Floor, K R Circle, Bengaluru-560001.

For electricity related complaints call 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra MOBILE APP

NATIONAL URBAN HEALTH MISSION
BANGALORE CITY HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SOCIETY ®
GREATER BANGALORE AUTHORITY
Office of the Chief Health Officer (PH), Annex-2nd Floor, G.B.A Head Officer, N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

No: CPMO/NUHM/PR/P-70/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025

NOTIFICATION

The walk-in process initiated through newspaper notification on 10.11.2025 for filling vacant posts under different National Health Programs under National Health Mission for a period of 01 year completely on contract basis. The walk-in process was conducted on 15.11.2025 in accordance with the above notification. The provisional list of candidates selected based on Merit cum Roaster is published in Greater Bangalore Authority website **(https://bbmp.gov.in)** If any objections by the candidates/ general public pertaining to the provisional list of various post the objections may be submitted within 07 Government working days from the date of this notification to the City Program Management Officer's Office, #304, Annex-3, Greater Bangalore Authority, N.R. Square, Bangalore-560002. only in person or by post (Register Post). This is also to inform that, the objections received after 07 Government working days will not be considered.

Sd/- Chief Health Officer (PH)
Greater Bangalore Authority

Government of Karnataka
The Office the Deputy Director Mines And Geology-Bagalkote-587103 Phone Number: 08354-297534

No: DMG/BGK/DMFT(cell)/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:09-12-2025

Publication of e-Auction

A District Mineral Foundation Cell will be established at the Office of the Deputy Director, Mines and Geology Department, Bagalkot. A total of (04) human services (outsourcing) including Civil Engineer-01, Computer Operator-01, 'D' Grade Employees-01 and Vehicle Driver-01 are required to perform duties in the said cell on an outsourced basis. Tenders are invited through e-procurement to appoint a qualified registered agency to provide the said human services and pay the salary. More information/details can be downloaded from the website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in, the last date for downloading the annexure and submitting the application is: 15-12-2025 at 5-00 PM. The tender in e-procurement has been started on: 03-12-2025. Applications must be submitted through the e-procurement platform.

For more information about the said e-auction, contact the Deputy Director's Office, Department of Mines and Geology, Bagalkot Office at telephone number: 08354-297534 and e-mail: dmgbagalkot@gmail.com.

Sd/-The Organizers Are DMFT
Deputy Director
Mines And Geology-Bagalkote
DIPR/BGK/RO-NO-438/KSMCA/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites bids for the following works.

No: CEE/Tr(Op)ZH/SEE(O)/AEE-4/K-8T4/2025-26/10863-64 Date: 09.12.2025

1) Work Indent No.: KPTCL/2025-26/IND0254
Tender for manufacture, testing and supply of different sizes of 1.1 kV, Class HR (Heat Resistant) PVC Insulated, **Copper Control** cables for maintenance works for various sub-stations coming under the jurisdiction of Transmission (Operation) Zone, Hassan conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at store/site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading.

No: CEE/Tr(Op)ZH/SEE(O)/AEE-3/F-T1/2025-26/10864-67 Date: 09.12.2025

2) Work Indent No.: KPTCL/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT3086
For "Combined package of balance portion of associated works pertaining to augmentation of Power Transformers at **Hiremagaluru, Balehonnuru and Lakkavalli** 66/11kV sub-stations in Operation Division, KPTCL, Chikkamagaluru **on PTK basis**"
The bids will be received through e-Procurement mode only. Detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the tendering process can be obtained by logging on to e-Portal website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "tenders" on or after **11.12.2025 at 11:00 Hrs.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, (Elec.),
Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 3rd Floor,
Prasarana Bhavana, Santhepete, B.M. Road, Hassan - 573201.

Directorate of Medical Education
BMC&RI (Old Building), 1st Floor, Fort, K.R. Road,
Bengaluru - 560002. Phone: 080-22870060 Fax: 080-22875798
E-mail: dmekarnataka@yahoo.com

No: ME/Tender/18/2025-26 Date: 10-12-2025

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) (Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal)

Tenders are invited for the **Purchase of Equipments for Establishment of Peripheral Cancer Care Centres at Mysore and Tumkur.** Tender Document and E.M.D., details can be viewed, downloaded & applied only through the KPP Portal. Interested tenderers have to register in the KPP Portal, details of which can be viewed in the Website: **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Commencement date for Uploading of Tenders Dt: 11-12-2025
Pre-Bid Meeting Dt: 20-12-2025 at 11.30 AM
Last date for Uploading the Tenders Dt: 12-01-2026 before 5.00 PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid Dt: 15-01-2026 at 11.30 AM

For further details contact **Director of Medical Education, BMC&RI (Old Building), 1st Floor, Fort, K.R. Road, Bengaluru - 560002.**

Sd/- Director
Director of Medical Education, Bengaluru.
DIPR/CP/4344/Adverto/2025-26

MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MINOR IRRIGATION & G.W.D DIVISION, TUMKUR

Ref No.15/2025-26 KW-1, KW-2, KW-3 & KW-4 (TWO COVER SYSTEM) KPP Portal DATE : 06.12.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
Dated 06.12.2025

On behalf of the Hon'ble Governor of State of Karnataka, as per K.T.P.P act with latest amendments, Item wise "KPPP" Portal tenders are invited for the works mentioned under H/A: 4702-MOT Pradhana, 472-A&P Pradhana, 4711-Pravaha, 4702-SCP & 4702-TSP works from the eligible contractors of suitable category registered under KPWD. Tender publishing details are as given below.
1. Tender will be published through KPP Portal on: Dated: 08-12-2025 at 16.00 Hours. 2. Pre bid meeting will be conducted on Office of the Superindent Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Circle, Bangalore on Dated: 16-12-2025 at 11.00 Hours. 2. Last date of queries on Dated: 16-12-2025 at 11.30 Hours. 3. Last date for Receipt of completed tenders through KPP portal may be uploaded before 17.00 Hours on Dated: 18-12-2025. 4. Technical Bid will be opened on Dated: 19-12-2025 at 17.05 Hours. 5. Financial Bid will be opened on Dated: 20-12-2025 at 17.10 Hours.
For further details, visit Kpp portal website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/or from the office undersigned, on working days. If the office happens to be closed on dates above as specified, the next working day at the same time and venue will be considered.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
M.I & G.W.D Division, Tumkur
DIPR/TUM/373/KSMCA/2025-26

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Unity sacrificed at the altar of politics

Vande Mataram was identified with the country's freedom struggle and has inspired generations of Indians, invoking their patriotic spirit and pride and love for the country. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's composition has played a historic role in the expression of the national spirit. It was rightly chosen as the national song after Independence, and still moves minds and hearts with its text, melody, and mood. It unified the country and its regions, races, religions, and other diversities into one invocation for the motherland. Unfortunately, it is now being sought to be used as a divisive tool for political ends. The debate in the two Houses of Parliament, proposed by the government, to mark the completion of 150 years of the song, was used as an occasion to blame Congress leaders, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru, for "fragmenting" the song. The decision to leave out some stanzas of the original song, which did not agree with the sensitivities of non-Hindus, particularly Muslims, was taken by the Congress Working Committee in 1937 on the recommendation of a committee headed by Rabindranath Tagore. The working committee, which included Subhas Chandra Bose and Sardar Patel, agreed with the recommendation, and Gandhiji endorsed it.

Vande Mataram's legacy demands respect, not controversy

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who faulted the Congress and Nehru for the decision, saw appeasement of Muslims and even the seeds of Partition in the decision. While he praised Vande Mataram as a unifier, his speech was political and even polarising. The Congress was an inclusive party, and the freedom struggle involved the whole country and all people; and it was right to respect the sensitivities of all sections. By creating controversies over historical events, and interpreting them in terms of narrow political interests and communal and ideological positions, he did not promote national unity. The decision to set apart a day each in the two Houses for debate on the song arose from this narrow political outlook.

Vande Mataram carries an emotional resonance in West Bengal, where the song was born, and where it has more political appeal than elsewhere. Assembly elections are to be held in the state next year, and the BJP has high hopes about them. The focus on the song and a polarising take on it could be part of the party's electoral narrative in the state. A debate that could have underlined the country's unity, by harking back to a symbol of the freedom struggle, was used to score political and electoral points. The Opposition pointed out that there are more urgent matters in India that need discussion and debate in Parliament, but the government chose to send out a political message with a display of poor national and parliamentary priorities. Symbols of unity should not be used to divide people.

Anna Bhagya betrayed by systemic decay

The allegation by BJP MLC C T Ravi that rice meant for Anna Bhagya is being smuggled not only across state borders but even to Dubai and Singapore has reopened a wound Karnataka has lived with for decades. Lending weight to his charge, Food and Civil Supplies Minister K H Muniyappa has confirmed that between April and November, over 29,600 quintals of rice, meant to go through the Public Distribution System (PDS), were seized and 570 people arrested. When a minister acknowledges such rot, it signals a system slipping beyond government control. Leakages have long plagued Karnataka's PDS. Lokayukta reports from 2011, and successive audits by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) have documented the diversion of subsidised grain. Fair price shops have been caught replacing high-quality PDS rice with inferior stock, while transport contractors have siphoned off consignments before they reach ration outlets. Official complicity has nurtured this parallel economy.

For poor households dependent on Anna Bhagya, such pilferage directly undermines food security. In some cases, manipulation at fair price shops results in erratic supply, forcing beneficiaries to make repeated trips. These disruptions strike hardest at the elderly, households headed by women, and daily-wage earners. Adding to the evolving landscape of welfare is the state government's recent decision to reduce the quantity of rice and introduce Indira Kits — a package containing other essential food items. While the move aims to diversify nutritional support, it also makes the integrity of the remaining rice supply even more critical. Any diversion now has a proportionally larger impact on families relying on a smaller quota.

The government must dismantle parallel economies, hollowing out welfare delivery

Ironically, the very rice procured at public cost to feed the poor is allegedly repackaged and sold for exorbitant profits. A scheme conceived as a lifeline has turned into a lucrative black-market. The State has deployed technology — Aadhaar linkage, biometric authentication, GPS-enabled trucks, and warehouse surveillance — but the persistence of pilferage shows that these measures have not cured systemic decay. The government could consider Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) as a complementary or alternative approach, particularly given its success when briefly implemented during rice procurement shortages. That experiment helped eliminate ghost ration cards, curb diversion, and yield fiscal savings while ensuring beneficiaries were empowered to buy grain of their choice. Anna Bhagya was designed to uphold the dignity of the poorest, not enrich smugglers. It is central to the government's vision of a 'hunger-free Karnataka', but unless the State firmly dismantles the entrenched networks hollowing out this welfare scheme, the initiative will continue to be exploited for profit at the cost of those it was meant to serve.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Ambedkar's warning still rings true

Every election demonstrates prevailing structural inequalities and entry barriers in the forms of caste, gender, status, and party

SRI HARSHA KANDUKURI

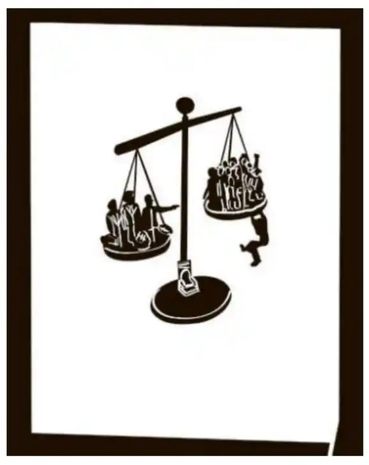
Prime Minister Narendra Modi and retired Chief Justice of India B R Gavai have both credited their success to B R Ambedkar and the Constitution of India, acknowledging that without it, they may not have risen to top constitutional positions. While the Constitution certainly opened doors for disadvantaged communities, the larger question remains: have we truly achieved political equality and social democracy after more than seven decades as a republic?

India's Constitution is a revolutionary document, which was designed to transform previously docile subjects into sovereign citizens with inalienable rights. Political equality is its cornerstone. That is why its framers insisted that there should be ample representation of people from all walks of life (especially from disadvantaged communities) in the legislatures and secured Articles 330 and 332, which provided reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies. The recent amendment to the Constitution, which provides for women's reservation in the political arena, is also a step in the same direction.

While we may have representation from the SCs and the STs in the legislatures, it is predominantly (or only) because of the reservation system. The recent Bihar election is yet another eye-opener for prevailing casteism and structural inequalities in Indian politics. Bihar has 243 Assembly constituencies, among which 40 (38 for the SCs and two for the STs) are reserved. It is unfortunate that in the 203 unreserved or general constituencies, not a single candidate from the SC or the ST communities could win the election. This shows inherent casteism, structural inequalities, and discrimination. One should seriously think about why we do not have serious contenders from the Dalit communities in general constituencies.

The political parties must be blamed for this situation. The five major political parties in Bihar — the BJP, the JDU, the RJD, the LJPRV, and the Congress — did not field a single Dalit candidate from a general seat. Does that mean the mantra of *jyathi nyay* (social justice) is confined only to a reserved constituency? If the elections are apparently fought in the name of the party or the chief minister, or the prime minister, it is surprising that these major parties could not find a Dalit candidate to contest from a general seat!

Among the 159 SC and ST candidates who contested from general seats, 62 were independent. The Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) is the only party to field 29 Dalit candidates from



general seats. The other political parties should do some soul-searching and revisit their commitment towards social justice.

Should we blame political parties and stop there? Ambedkar, a staunch advocate of separate electorates who compromised with Mahatma Gandhi during the Poona Pact, knew that a Dalit would not win in a general constituency. He observed that "the Scheduled Castes voters are almost always in a minority, if not in a hopeless minority". He called the joint electorate system (which we follow today) a "rotten borough", where the candidate from the reserved community has to function at the mercy of the upper caste Hindus, because of sheer majority. He also remarked, "No Caste Hindu will cast a vote in favour of an Untouchable candidate, for to him he is too contemptible a person to go to the Legislature. On the other hand, there will be found many voters among the Untouchables who would willingly cast their votes for a Hindu candidate in preference to an Untouchable candidate. That is because he is taught to revere the former more than himself or his Untouchable kinsmen."

Ambedkar's prophecy seems to be true. No political party that has a stake in the election wants to field a Dalit candidate in the general constituency, and if we analyse the data of the 159 Dalit candidates mentioned above, only one (Dharmendra Kumar from Hisua) was able to secure the deposit (to get more than 10% of the total votes polled). The average vote percentage of Dalit candidates is only 0.85%. There are more barriers based on gender. Only nine female Dalit candidates contested from the general seats.

Ambedkar, in his famous speech before the Constituent Assembly on the day before the adoption of the Constitution, talked about the 'life of contradictions' and 'the need for social democracy.' These ideas have relevance even after 75 years of the Constitution. Ambedkar pointed out that once the Constitution comes into force, "In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics, we will be recognising the principle of 'one man one vote and one vote one value. In our social and economic life, we shall, by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man one value. How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life?" He believed that the Constitution could achieve political democracy, but we must also strive for social democracy, where liberty, equality, and fraternity become the way of life.

The Constitution undoubtedly realised the vision of electoral democracy, where every person is free to contest and win. But every election demonstrates prevailing structural inequalities and entry barriers in the forms of caste, gender, status, and party, and convinces us that social democracy is still a distant dream. It is time for society to ask like Thucydides: "It may be your interest to be our masters, but how can it be ours to be your slaves?"

(The writer is a PhD research scholar at NLS-Bengaluru and a faculty member at the School of Law, Christ University)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Waiting for Godot

I realised that one could plan a divine destination and yet be firmly grounded

ANIL ABRAHAM

Kamala and I were off on a holiday – finally! We had planned for months, researched alternatives and booked our modest hotel close to the temple. Our bags were packed with warm clothing and snacks for the times when we felt homesick. We had chosen seats with more leg space and booked a comfortable cab to the airport. We had a contact person who would help us to reach the sanctum sanctorum without long queues. Now all we needed to do was get on the plane and begin our adventure.

Our adventure began a little earlier than planned. At the airport we noticed a buzz of angry people in clusters everywhere. All appeared suspiciously calm at the check-in counter, and our bags looked helplessly back at us as they were loaded and disappeared from view. We were all set for Varanasi, and we took an airport selfie. I sent the photo with my customary 'good morning *gyan*' to the family WhatsApp group – failing to prepare is preparing to fail. Nothing had prepared us for what was about to happen.

The newspapers were still reporting Putin's visit and the falling rupee as we settled down near our departure gate. Since we had decided to minimise the use of social media on this trip, we were blissfully unaware of the storm brewing around us. We glanced up at someone shouting at a counter and smiled indulgently, "These people should choose their airline carefully because 'Being On Time is A Wonderful Thing'." The first sign of real trouble was a suspicious two-hour delay and a complete absence of staff at the counter. One unfortunate young man did gather the courage to appear and was promptly surrounded by angry uncles and aunties insisting that they be heard. The pitch of the voices and the volume of the anger escalated to parliamentary levels.

Within a few hours the airport filled up with crowds of helpless, harassed travellers that poignantly resembled scenes of migrant workers returning home during the pandemic. We opened up our snacks and found that demand far exceeded supply in a hungry, angry airport. Finally a cancellation was announced, and another long, arduous wait began for our bags. As I sat in the cab headed home after 18 hours of waiting for Indigo, I realised that one could plan a divine destination and yet be firmly grounded.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Restore judicial oversight in EC appointments

I refer to 'Biggest act of vote theft: Rahul hits out at BJP-EC collusion' (Dec 10). Rahul Gandhi's charge of vote theft should not be dismissed as political exaggeration. His criticism points to verifiable institutional shifts undermining the constitutional spirit of Articles 324 and 326. Article 324 guarantees the Election Commission's independence, and Article 326 ensures universal suffrage—both dependent on public trust in electoral neutrality. Yet the 2023 law, which removed the Chief Justice from the selection panel, granted sweeping "good-faith" immunity to Commissioners, and allows polling-station CCTV footage to be erased after 45 days, weakens these safeguards. International assessments, including the Electoral Integrity Project, show India's electoral standards slipping—particularly in campaign finance, media fairness, and misuse of State agencies. If the government truly trusts the system, it should implement machine-readable voter lists, extend CCTV retention, allow independent EVM audits, and restore judicial oversight in EC appointments. Democracies do not erode from opposition speeches; they erode when those in power fear accountability.

K V Chandramouli, Mysuru

Unite, don't divide

Apropos 'Nehru truncated Vande Mataram to bow to Muslim League: PM' (Dec 10), it seems unnecessary and unwise to revisit political decisions of the 1940s, which could instigate communal tension. Invoking past leaders' actions serves little purpose 75 years later, other than deepening hatred at a time when unity should be the priority. The decision taken by then PM must be understood in the context of the immediate post-Partition period, where social harmony was crucial. As a high school student, I believe India needs reminders of unity, not division.

Mehreen M, Bengaluru

System vs power

I refer to 'Survivor stands tall, system falls short' (Dec 10). The acquittal after an eight-year legal battle marked by intense media scrutiny undermines faith in the justice system, reinforcing the perception that wealth and power ensure impunity. The verdict highlights not only the actor's acquittal but also the system's fragility when confronted with power.

Malavika Menon, Bengaluru

Domestic reforms vital

Apropos '8.2% growth is good. Now read fine print' (Dec 10), India needs urgent domestic reforms—not just aspirations—if it is to achieve its trillion-dollar export target by 2030. The target is threatened by high transaction costs, particularly logistics expenses that exceed global benchmarks, and bureaucratic hurdles that stifle manufacturing competitiveness. Success demands aggressive, fast-tracked implementation of infrastructure projects and simplification of regulations. Until these efficiency puzzles are solved, achieving the target will remain challenging.

Kanu Priya S, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

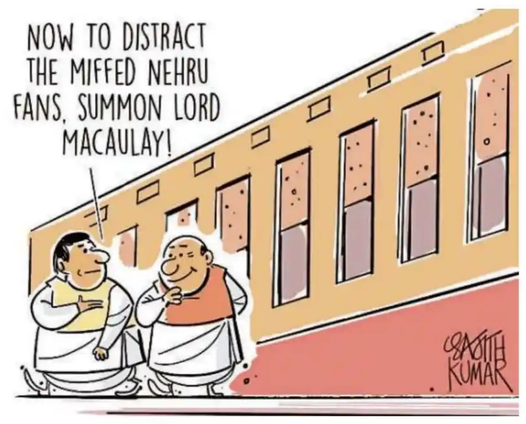
We are deeply committed to the Quad — the grouping with India, Japan and Australia — and will continue to build on that in the year to come, which is something you'll see...

Marco Rubio, US Secretary of State

Diplomacy means the art of nearly deceiving all your friends, but not quite deceiving all your enemies.

Kofi Busia

TO BE PRECISE



IN PERSPECTIVE

India's skies face a talent crunch

Addressing the aviation crisis demands training standards India has yet to achieve

ANAND JACOB VERGHESE

The ongoing meltdown at IndiGo underlines how acute India's pilot shortage has become. In November alone, the airline cancelled 1,232 flights — of which 755 were reportedly due to crew shortages and compliance with new rest-and-duty norms. Between December 2 and 5, IndiGo scrapped ~2,000 flights, forcing the aviation regulator to intervene and temporarily relax some norms.

This crisis raises a pressing question: can India's flying training organisations (FTOs) scale up fast enough, and at the required quality, to meet the rising demand for trained pilots, particularly as the airlines would be hiring hundreds of pilots and co-pilots to stabilise operations? Without meaningful improvements in training infrastructure, curricula, and capacity, the industry risks facing similar operational disruptions even as air traffic continues to grow.

India's aviation industry is entering an unprecedented growth cycle. With Indian carriers collectively ordering nearly 1,700 new aircraft, and the government projecting a requirement of 30,000 additional pilots over the next decade, the country is on the verge of a major talent crunch. Today, India has ~6,000 active commercial pilots. This is far short of what will be needed as new aircraft, new routes, and new airports come online at a record pace. The government's policy is aggressively pro-expansion: 50 new airports in the next five years, 120 new destinations in 10 years, and a renewed push under UDAN. Clearly, aircraft and routes are arriving faster than the supply of high-quality pilots, technicians, and aviation personnel can keep pace.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)'s first-ever ranking of FTOs in October offered a reality check. Of the 35 FTOs assessed, none achieved an A or A+ rating. Thirteen schools were graded B, and 22 received C, indicating that most facilities remain far from global standards. This comes at a time when pilot training costs are rising sharply. An independent commercial pilot licence (CPL) can cost Rs 35-50 lakh, while airline cadet programmes can touch Rs 70 lakh to Rs 1 crore. Yet, placement outcomes remain inconsistent. Recent DGCA data shows that nearly one in three licensed Indian pilots was unemployed, largely due to uneven training quality and cyclical hiring.

Infrastructure constraints exacerbate the challenge. Many FTOs still rely on ageing single-engine trainers with limited modern avionics. Access to quality simulators and modules — including multi-crew cooperation (MCC), upset prevention and recovery training (UPRT), and crew resource management (CRM) — is sporadic despite being industry-standard abroad. Other training segments face similar challenges. India outsources over 85% of its aircraft maintenance work, despite new maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) investments such as Safran's LEAP engine facility in Hyderabad. Drone training is fragmented, and cabin crew/ground operations courses are largely unregulated.

India requires both scale and quality transformation to meet the demands of the next 20 years, and this calls for a two-tier reform strategy. At the system level, India must move from isolated FTOs to integrated training ecosystems. This means creating dedicated training airports or clusters that bring together multiple FTOs, aircraft maintenance engineering schools, drone academies, and MRO facilities — many of which can be housed at underutilised UDAN airports.

Quality-linked incentives are also essential. Access to AAI concessions, land leases, and credit support should be tied to DGCA performance metrics, supported by public dashboards that track pass rates, placement outcomes and safety audit results to improve transparency and accountability. Curricula must be modernised through a decisive shift to competency-based training aligned with ICAO standards, alongside integrated CPL pathways that include MCC and jet-readiness modules.

Finally, financing needs to become significantly more accessible. This requires affordable, long-term education loans backed by government guarantees, as well as targeted scholarships for women and cadets from smaller towns, ensuring that training opportunities expand in an inclusive and sustainable manner. Academies will need to chase A-grade DGCA rankings, invest in modern fleets, integrate advanced behavioural and simulator training, and build strong airline/MRO partnerships.

The expansion into adjacent domains, such as drones, aviation management, human factors, data analytics, and cybersecurity, will define the next-generation aviation campus. Institutions also need robust counselling ecosystems to prevent the rising 'CPL but no job' debt trap.

India is poised to become one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets by 2035. But the DGCA's rankings reveal a training system that has not kept pace with the sector's ambitions. India will need to expand capacity rapidly, and raise training standards to global benchmarks. If achieved, it will not only meet its domestic pilot and technician needs, but also emerge as a global aviation talent hub by 2047. If it fails, the country risks grounding its growth story.

(The writer is chairman, Orient Flights Aviation Academy, Mysuru, and Hindustan Group of Institutions)

Dilemmas in India's incremental march to fifth-gen fighters

RAHUL BATRA

The very public nature of the tragic Tejas fighter aircraft crash at the recent Dubai Air Show, costing the Indian Air Force (IAF) pilot his life, also hit a raw national nerve in India. One that carries a burning desire to showcase the country's growing technological and industrial prowess to the world. In Tejas's case, it's a 40-year process of trials and tribulations that seems close to bearing fruit on that collective desire. However, the geopolitical tables India so wishes to exert its growing socio-economic influence on have long moved on to the next frontier of military aviation.

The generation gap

'Survivability' is the overarching criterion to determine a fighter jet's evolutionary 'generation'. The LCA-Tejas programme's technological paradigm (including the upcoming MkIA and futuristic Mk2 variants) is considered to be in the 4.0-4.5 range of fighter jet generation nomenclature. For reference, India's Russian-origin and domestically manufactured Su-30MKI planes belong to the fourth generation. French-origin Rafales are classified as 4.5.

In comparison, the United States (Boeing's F-22 'Raptor' and Lockheed Martin's F-35 'Lightning') and China (Chengdu's J20 'Mighty Dragon') already operate fifth-generation fighter jets. The foremost feature defining this generation is stealth (the ability to penetrate enemy airspaces undetected), supplemented by supercruise (sustained supersonic flight with greater fuel efficiency and combat range), advanced manoeuvrability, sensor fusion (integrating data from multiple onboard sensors into actionable information), and network-centricity (advanced situational awareness through real-time information).

Russia has been developing stealth capabilities for nearly two decades, and began operating its semi-stealth Su-57 Felon in 2020. While it offers weaker 'all aspect' stealth and technology systems than the US and Chinese jets, its deep-strike capabilities have earned battle-tested recognition in Ukraine and Syria. India's next-generation indigenous stealth fighter programme, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), is expected to roll out its prototype by 2028-2029, with production slated for 2032-2033, and deliveries targeted for 2035-2036, barring delays.

The past, present, and future

In its early bid to acquire stealth technology, India sought but failed to purchase the best-in-class F-22 Raptor in the early 2000s. In 2005, it explored a partnership on the F-35 programme. Unable to join, in 2007, India turned to Russia's programme of advanced front-line aviation complexes (PAK-FA), later known as the Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA) programme. By 2010, a preliminary contract was signed to deliver 250 aircraft to the IAF at an estimated $35 billion. Years of delays, design differences, and cost overruns led India to exit the programme in 2018, after investing $295 million.

In 2011, the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), launched the AMCA programme. Designed as a 25-tonne, twin-engine, single-seat fighter capable of Mach 2.15 (2,600 kmph), the Mk-1 variant is expected to offer a competitive combat range of 1,620 kilometres. Manufacturing of its first prototype began in March 2022, and in March 2024, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved a Rs 15,000 crore-project to develop five prototypes. This March, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved the programme's 'execution model', allowing Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to compete and partner with private sector players.

Russia continues to offer deep collaboration to India and has even upped the ante this year, considering China's rapid, threatening advances in this field. The Chinese have significantly expanded production of the J20 'Mighty Dragon' stealth fighter, enhancing engine thrust for speed and range, and advancing network-centric co-ordination with radars, drones, and other reconnaissance and command grids — thus, setting the foundation for future generations of AI-powered air force systems.

This is where India's already grave air combat and defence conundrums — on account of a six-decade low fighter jet squadron strength of 29 against the sanctioned 42, which is a serious national security impediment — get amplified. With only the American F-35, Chinese J-35, and Russian Su-57 available on the global market, India's interim choices are limited. The US' costly and troubled F-35 programme comes with technical, operational, and sovereign constraints. At the same time, China, a geopolitical adversary, is set to supply up to 40 units of its soon-to-be-deployed J-35s to Pakistan from 2026. This leaves Russia, India's long-standing military supplier and geopolitical well-wisher, as the most viable near-term source to acquire fifth-generation capabilities.

For a rising power like India, such advanced, and sensitive, technology paradigms and ecosystems rarely emerge from an exponential leap. Rather, they tend to be an evolution of a steady commitment and investment towards incremental waves. Unlike the generation-leading Rafale and F-22, the Su-57 is an evolving platform. Though expected to be a costlier long-term option, due to stealth maintenance needs compared to the Rafale and its two-engine design versus the F-35, the Su-57 offers lower initial unit costs, partial compatibility with India's existing fighter jet manufacturing lines, and Russia's willingness to offer both technology transfer and joint production. Combined with India's immediate operational needs, these factors make the programme a compelling prospect as indigenous LCA and AMCA programmes mature alongside.

(The writer works on technology and geopolitics)

Conservative women once rose by proving they didn't need feminism. Now, as unapologetic sexism becomes a badge of identity on the America right, many are discovering the limits of loyalty

Republican women hit the glass ceiling, again

MICHELLE GOLDBERG

In 1982, Phyllis Schlafly, perhaps the most important anti-feminist in American history, debated radical feminist law professor Catharine MacKinnon. Schlafly believed that sexism was a thing of the past; to her, if women had different roles in society than men, it was due to their distinct talents and inclinations. She herself, she said, had never experienced discrimination.

MacKinnon pointed out that Schlafly, who'd written extensively about defence policy, had wanted a position in Ronald Reagan's Pentagon.

Any man with Schlafly's considerable accomplishments, MacKinnon argued, would have been given a job. Schlafly had to concede that her feminist foe had a point.

An ambitious woman who is willing to absolve the right of misogyny can go far, but rarely can she achieve the same status as a man. That's especially true today, in a Republican Party that's increasingly giving itself over to the most retrograde forms of sexism.

Recently several Republican women in Congress have been complaining, on and off the record, that their party's leaders, especially Mike Johnson, the House speaker, don't take them seriously. It started with Rep Marjorie Taylor Greene, a one-time Make America Great Again (MAGA) icon who is resigning next month.

"They want women just to go along with whatever they're doing and basically to stand there, smile and clap with approval, whereas they just have their good old boys club," she said in September. It turns out she's not alone in her frustration.

Last week, *The New York Times* reported on Republican women in Congress who say that Johnson "failed to listen to them or engage in direct conversations on major political and policy issues," which they seemed to attribute to his highly patriarchal evangelical Christianity. (He recently said that women, unlike men, are unable to "compartmentalise" their thoughts.)

Feeling sidelined by Johnson, some Republican women are defying him. All but one of the House Republicans who bucked leadership to force a vote on releasing the Epstein files were women.

Of the eight Republicans who joined with Democrats in November to try to censure their fellow Republican Cory Mills — who has been accused of threatening his ex with revenge porn — six were women. Recently, rumours have swirled that Nancy Mace, who is running for governor of South Carolina, could soon follow Greene in quitting the House before the end of her term. Mace has denied this, but her disgruntlement is no secret.

On Monday, she wrote in the *Times*, "Women will never be taken seriously until leadership decides to take us seriously, and I'm no longer holding my breath."

A movement sliding backwards

It's tempting to roll one's eyes at women who are shocked, shocked to discover sexism in a political party led by Donald Trump. But it's a sign of progress that these women are not responding as Schlafly did, demurely accepting their subordinate position within conservatism.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

They may not all call themselves feminists — though at times Mace has — but they've internalised basic feminist assumptions about their entitlement to equal treatment. What they've failed to understand, however, is that those aren't assumptions their party shares.

Much has been made about the rebirth of gutter antisemitism and racism within the conservative movement. There's been less public alarm about the resurgence of unapologetic misogyny.

Last month, there was an uproar over the support that the Heritage Foundation's president, Kevin Roberts, offered to Tucker Carlson after his softball interview with Nick Fuentes, the influential antisemite. We've seen far less backlash to Heritage's hiring of Scott Yenor, who believes that workplace discrimination against women should be legal, as head of its B Kenneth Simon Centre for American Studies.

Among the sort of young men who revel in transgressive antisemitism — which is to say, among much of the conservative movement's rising generation — calls to repeal women's right to vote have become commonplace.

From tokenism to open patriarchy

Not long ago, most Republicans at least pretended to accept liberal premises about human equality, sometimes even gloating about one-upping Democrats on diversity.

In 2008, Republicans tried to capitalise on the disappointment some women felt about Hillary Clinton's primary loss by putting Sarah Palin on their ticket. There was a moment in 2011 when Michele Bachmann was a leading candidate in the Republican presidential primary race.

For years it was almost a truism that the first woman president would probably be a Republican, some steely American version of Margaret Thatcher in high heels and pearls. Republicans didn't want to raise up women as a group, but they valourised a certain kind of powerful woman, one who disdained feminism and proved through her success that the strong didn't need it.

Today, however, Republicans are much less defensive about being the party of chest-beating patriarchy. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth has purged women from the highest ranks of the military. Johnson has attributed school shootings to the "amoral society" wrought by "radical feminism" and the sexual revolution and has said Americans should strive to live by "18th-century values." Vice President J D Vance is famously contemptuous of women without children.

And the lower levels of the administration are littered with defiant chauvinists. Paul Ingrassia, who Trump recently made deputy general counsel at the General Services Administration, is probably best known for a leaked email where he referred to his "Nazi streak." But he also reportedly intervened during a federal investigation on behalf of misogynist influencer Andrew Tate — who is his former client and has been accused of sex trafficking — after electronic devices belonging to Tate and his brother were seized at the border, and he called opposition to women's suffrage "very based," a term of high praise on the right.

There are still plenty of opportunities in the MAGA movement for women who embody Trump's preferred style of hyper-femininity, espouse traditional gender roles, or both. Indeed, the president's obsession with aesthetics can open doors for women who might otherwise never have careers in politics. Many Republicans like having beautiful women around, and they appreciate being able to put a feminine face on their culture war crusades. But as some women in the party are realizing, there's a big difference between being useful and being respected.

The New York Times

Reinvent materials, not narratives

RUNA RAY

The world today seems awash with material innovations – cactus leather handbags, recycled PET plastic shoes, and textiles made from banana stems, lotus, rose petals and even milk protein. Packaging made from natural fibres promises compostability. Fashion marketing has spun an alluring narrative: once again, nature will save us. It is a story as seductive as it is comforting—a belief that we can keep consuming as we always have, only now with cleaner materials. But the truth, as I have learnt through years of working with sustainability and textile innovation, is far more complicated.

Bio-materials hold immense promise. Yet, in the rush to declare a planet-saving revolution, we are creating fresh confusion, blind spots and, at times, new layers of greenwashing. Most 'miracle fibres' cannot exist on their own. To become wearable textiles, they must be chemically broken down and blended with a stronger structural material—usually cellulose derived from wood pulp or other plants.

I first discovered this years ago at a textile factory in Delhi. They proudly promoted fabrics made from rose petals, soy, aloe and lotus. I held a roll of what was called "rose-petal fabric", and the narrative grew more poetic with every explanation. But something felt amiss. With help from textile scientists, the picture became clear: the fabric was essentially cellulose—likely wood pulp—with only traces of the advertised natural input. Once cellulose is dissolved and reconstituted, the original plant markers vanish.

A similar misunderstanding surrounds the rising world of "bio-leathers". These materials are celebrated as ethical, biodegradable alternatives to animal leather, and a few are indeed breakthroughs. But many contain only small percentages of the natural feedstock. To mimic leather's strength, flexibility and waterproof qualities, manufacturers add synthetic coatings and petrochemical binders. Surfaces are often finished with polyurethane or acrylic layers for durability and sheen. The result looks and feels beautiful, but it is not the natural, chemical-free innovation consumers imagine—and plastic coating brings its own microplastic pollution.

The issue is not the ambition behind bio-materials but the opacity around them. When brands withhold the truth about the processes, the burden falls on consumers, who cannot distinguish genuine sustainability from skilful illusion.

During a visit to NIFT Raebareli, students in the leather department were eager yet hesitant about new bio-leathers. Their concern was clear: these materials are prohibitively expensive and visually indistinguishable from synthetics. Inspect the reverse side of many bio-leathers, and the truth reveals itself: a polyester backing. How then can we call them sustainable or "bio" at all?

This problem is even more evident in the trend of turning ocean plastic into shoes. It sounds heroic: collect plastic, recycle it and turn it into footwear. But reality is a troubling form of environmental injustice. Plastic collected in one country is processed in another and turned into shoes that often cannot be recycled again. Plastic can only be recycled a limited number of times; after a short life, these shoes end up in landfills. Countries handling the waste carry the environmental burden—chemical runoff, air emissions, unrecyclable residues—while the story of "saving the oceans" continues elsewhere.

Circularity is a beautiful concept but meaningless when systems are globalised and opaque. If a product's waste is generated in one country, processed in another, sold in a third and discarded who knows where—can we claim it helps the planet? True circularity demands local accountability: materials should be created, used and returned within the same ecosystem whenever possible, without exporting the burden.

Sustainability is not a label. It is a system. And no system can work without transparency.

These inconsistencies are called out at various international meetings, not to shame brands but to advocate for honesty. Criticism is rarely welcomed. Corporations prefer applause for their environmental gestures, not scrutiny that reveals complexity. Yet without honest conversations, consumers may believe they are making eco-friendly choices while unknowingly supporting systems that perpetuate pollution, injustice and waste.

The way forward is not to reject material innovation but to demand better ones—to insist on transparency and on processes that reduce harm rather than hide it. A product does not need to be perfect; it needs to be truthful.

(The writer is a fashion environmentalist collaborating with the United Nations and World Bank on fashion and sustainability)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: DECEMBER 1975

PM lays stress on responsible role of Opposition

New Delhi, December 10
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today expressed "earnest hope" that the Opposition would make an effort now "to function with a greater sense of responsibility." She asked the Opposition to realise that if political cohesion was weakened, it would take years if not generations to "repair the damage." Releasing a commemorative volume entitled "The Constitution and the Parliament in India" as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Constitution and Parliament, she said the structure of democracy should be safeguarded.

25 YEARS AGO: DECEMBER 2000

Allies express full support for Vajpayee

New Delhi, Dec 10
In a damage control exercise to extricate the Vajpayee government from the wrath of the Opposition parties in the wake of the prime minister's controversial remarks on the Ayodhya issue, the ruling National Democratic Alliance today expressed "full support" to the leadership of Mr Vajpayee and reiterated that the government was committed to abide by the Supreme Court's verdict. Defence Minister and NDA convener George Fernandes has called for a meeting tomorrow to discuss the strategy on handling the angry Opposition in the House.

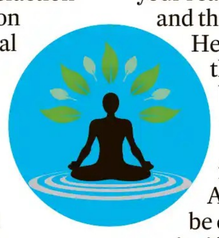
OASIS | BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ

Gratitude, wisdom, and the art of contentment

It is often observed that spiritual or enlightened individuals exude inner peace, contentment, and purity. Yet, most people rarely pause to understand the factors that lead to such a state, let alone strive to attain it, despite valuing it highly.

Quiet reflection shows that contentment does not come from material wealth or achievements. It comes when the darkness of ignorance lifts, when restless desires for worldly gain fade.

To understand contentment, we would first need to understand the opposite of it, i.e., discontentment. If we look around, then we would hardly find anyone who is not discontented. According to experts, there are numerous causes of man's discontentment or dissatisfaction that brings mental agitation and disturbs his intellectual equipoise as a result of which he is weighed down with despair, tension, animosity and mental agony.



A discontented person has a typical habit to build castles in the air while he is as poor as he can be. Such people completely fail to understand that it is only by dint of hard work that a man can make both ends meet, and only a man of right understanding can work on the right lines.

Otherwise, it is a blunder to let your reason be clouded by passion and thus lose your own happiness.

Hence, we should remember that just as food sustains the body so does the mind find sustenance in happiness. So, the saying goes: there is no food as good as happiness. And, to be happy, you have to be content.

As Alfred Nobel has rightly said that 'Contentment is the only real wealth', we should therefore not run after securing another kind of wealth to lose the wealth of contentment. In the end, contentment is not a luxury, it is the foundation of a life well-lived. It teaches us that happiness is not found in the endless pursuit of material gain, but in the quiet acceptance of what we have.

When we cultivate contentment, we free ourselves from the chains of envy, restlessness, and endless comparison. We learn to work with purpose, to serve with sincerity, and to find joy in small achievements rather than grand illusions. Remember! True peace and fulfilment arise not from wealth or recognition, but from the richness of a heart that knows gratitude, the courage to let go, and the wisdom to embrace life exactly as it is.

Who after Modi? Decision to be taken by BJP, PM: RSS chief

CHENNAI, DHNS: Refusing to be drawn into the debate on the successor of Narendra Modi, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Wednesday said it was for the prime minister and BJP to deliberate and decide on the issue. Bhagwat made the remarks in response to a question at an event in Chennai on Tuesday.

Mohan Bhagwat

Speaking at RSS 100 Years: Saga of RSS Envisioning The Way Forward, he said, "Certain questions are out of my purview. So, I don't have any say in them. I can only wish well and nothing else. Who after Modi ji? That is for the BJP and Modi ji to decide," Bhagwat said.

Bhagwat's remarks assume significance as this is the second time in four months that he has expressed his unwillingness to comment on issues relating to the 'unwritten rule' in the BJP of retirement on turning 75 and who, after Modi.

In August, Bhagwat had said he never advocated that neither he nor anyone should retire at the age of 75, clarifying remarks made earlier 'in a different context'.

The debate around retirement assumed significance since Modi turned 75 this September – the BJP made it clear that there is no rule in the party that says one should retire at a particular age.

Centre: No bias in IAF women's permanent commission

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Centre on Wednesday refuted in the Supreme Court the allegation of discrimination and bias in the grant of permanent commission to Short Service Commission (SSC) women officers in the Indian Air Force and said 243 men and 177 women were inducted since 2019.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Ujjal Bhuyan and N Kotiswar Singh, which reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas of women SSC officers challenging denial of permanent commission, was told by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati that after the Centre granted its sanction in 2022, the IAF started induction of women through NDA. On successful completion of training, these officers will be directly granted permanent commission.

Refuting the allegation of bias raised by some SSC officers who were denied permanent commission, Bhati, appearing for the Centre said, "These officers were fairly considered on three eligible occasions but could not be granted PC due to not meeting minimum performance criteria and/ or could not qualify merit against the available vacancies in their respective branches."

She said the human resource policy of 2019 grants permanent commission to all SSCOs of Ground duty branch commissioned after May 2006.

Urban-to-village voter shift in UP rattles BJP ahead of 2027 elections

Address change trend sparks alarm in saffron camp; party fears it may dent prospects

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

The Opposition parties may be apprehensive about what they allege is the possible deletion of voters considered their core supporters during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in Uttar Pradesh. But reports of a large section of urban voters, seen as the BJP's vote bank, shifting their voting addresses to their villages have triggered concern within the saffron party.

Apparently alarmed, the BJP's top leadership has directed its state unit to devise a strategy to check this trend, fearing it could affect the party's performance in the 2027 Assembly polls.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has held a series of meetings with party workers on the issue and asked ministers, MPs and MLAs to reach out to urban voters and persuade them not to shift their voting addresses to their villages.

Village addresses

According to reports, a little over 10% of voters in Lucknow city have opted for their village addresses in the SIR forms.

In Prayagraj, around two lakh voters have made the same choice, while in Ayodhya the number stands at about 30,000.

YOGI ADITYANATH
Uttar Pradesh C M

"Do not assume that those opposing SIR are not working on the ground. Their cadres are actively engaged. BJP workers must respond with equal commitment.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, BJP leader and Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh retained the Lucknow seat, but the saffron party lost both Prayagraj and Ayodhya to the I.N.D.I.A alliance. Urban voters have traditionally been among the BJP's core supporters. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the party won 12 of the 17 urban seats, and a year earlier, it had swept all mayoral contests across 17 cities.

SIR FINDINGS

- Over 10% Lucknow voters opt for village addresses in SIR forms
- Two lakh Prayagraj voters shift addresses, 30,000 in Ayodhya
- BJP fears urban voters may skip polls if registered in villages
- Land-rights fears drive urban voters to villages, say sources
- CM Yogi Adityanath asks party workers to persuade voters not to shift

BJP sources said urban voters were opting for their village addresses out of fear that their ownership rights over ancestral land might weaken if they remained registered in urban areas.

The saffron party fears its electoral prospects could be affected, as many urban voters may not travel to their villages to cast their ballots during elections.

According to sources, BJP leaders have been reaching out through booth-level workers to persuade urban voters not to shift their voting addresses to their villages.

Shah defends electoral reforms, sparks fiery exchange with Rahul

Backs drive to 'detect, delete & deport'; Oppn walks out

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Home Minister Amit Shah faced off with Opposition Leader Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday during a debate on electoral reforms.

Shah justified the need for a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter lists by citing a 2010 rule, which stated that returning officers no longer have the right to make deletions from voter lists due to deaths or migrations. He also asserted that the government's agenda is to 'detect, delete and deport' illegal immigrants.

In a fiery exchange with Rahul Gandhi, who questioned him for not responding to questions he had raised on Tuesday, Shah shot back and said, "I have a long experience in this House ... No one will decide the structure of my speech and what I should speak about."

In response, Gandhi said Shah was "rattled and defensive". The Opposition later staged a walkout.

Shah said the first instance of 'vote-chori' took place when Sardar Patel got more votes than Jawaharlal Nehru in the Congress Working Committee, and yet, Nehru was made the prime minister.

Another instance, he said, was when Indira Gandhi won elections from Raebareli and the Allahabad High Court ruled that the elections were unfair. "Indira ji then came up with a law which granted immunity to the prime minister; she gave immunity to herself," Shah said.

The third instance, he added, was the case against Sonia Gandhi, contending that she became a voter before she became an Indian citizen.

Shah also accused the opposition of spreading falsehoods on SIR and launched a strong defence of the exercise, asking whether democracy can be safe when the prime minister and the chief ministers are decided by 'ghuspathiye'.

He alleged Opposition leaders like Tejashwi Yadav, Prashant Kishor, Pawan Khera, Sanjay Singh, Kishori Pednekar, etc, have voter IDs in more than one place. He also said that when the system of elections was decided, the BJP had not even been formed.

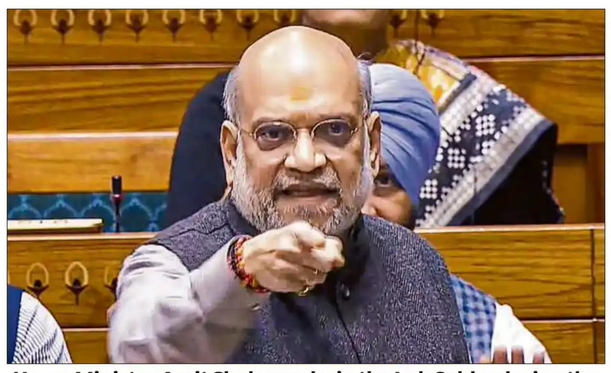
"EVMs were brought in place by Rajiv Gandhi in 1989. They did a trial in 19 assembly segments in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi before the system was introduced ... In fact, VVPATs were also introduced after five years of research and till now, there has been no mismatch in any of the 16,000 EVMs," Shah said.

During their heated exchange, Rahul said, "I challenge Amit Shah to hold a debate at my press conference." In response, Shah said that over 501 people were living in one of the addresses Gandhi had pointed to in Haryana, as the house is spread over an acre.

Shah accused the Opposition of raising issues as the exercise deleted the names of illegal immigrants, and cautioned the TMC of not joining hands with the Congress.

ON FIRE

- Amit Shah blames Congress' poll losses on its leadership
- The home minister cites 2010 rule to defend the Special Intensive Revision of voter lists
- Accuses the Opposition of spreading lies on SIR and questioned whether democracy is safe if "ghuspathiye" decide PMs and chief ministers



Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament on Wednesday. PTI

Joshi calls Rahul a 'part-time leader' over Germany trip

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Union minister Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday criticised Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over his upcoming Germany visit during the Winter Session, calling him a "part-time" political leader.

"Whenever Parliament is in session, Rahul Gandhi is mostly abroad. Later he alleges he wasn't allowed to speak, but he is frequently absent," Joshi said.

"In reality, Rahul frequently remains absent from Parliament sessions. He is a "part-time and irresponsible political leader," Joshi told reporters.

Responding strongly to the Congress leaders' allegations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi regarding his foreign trips, Joshi questioned why Rahul takes trips coinciding with Parliament sittings. "Even after holding the LoP post, Rahul shows no seriousness in politics," Joshi said.

CIC selection: Rahul flags lack of Bahujan voices

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

In a dissent note submitted during a meeting to select the Central Information Commissioner, Information Commissioners and Vigilance Commissioners—attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah—Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi said that Dalit, Adivasi, OBC, EBC and minority communities have not been adequately represented, *DH* has learnt.

Modi heads the three-member committee, which met for 88 minutes on Wednesday. Rahul argued that the communities "inadequately" represented together account for 90% of the population. Government sources said he also objected to some of the proposed candidates.

Sources in the Congress said that several weeks ago, Rahul had requested details of the caste composition of applicants. The details, provided on Wednesday, showed that less than 7% of applicants and only one shortlisted candidate were from Bahujan communities.

After Rahul raised the issue, both the prime minister and the home minister agreed to consider a few appointments from the limited applicant pool. The government holds a majority in the committee.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

In the meeting, Rahul said the exclusion of these communities pointed to a systemic pattern in current and past appointments to constitutional and autonomous institutions.

The meeting was convened to select the Central Information Commissioner (CIC), eight Information Commissioners and the Vigilance Commissioner. In all, three meetings were held.

The CIC has been without a chief since September. Of the 10 sanctioned posts of Information Commissioners, one remains vacant. The transparency officers review complaints and appeals filed under the Right to Information (RTI) Act when government departments withhold information.

As per Section 12(3) of the RTI Act, the PM chairs the committee, with the Leader of Opposition and a Union minister nominated by the PM as members.

Savarkar award row: Tharoor says he was not aware

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, who has been nominated for an award named after Hindutva ideologue Veer Savarkar, insisted he was unaware of being chosen for the honour, while the organisers countered that he was personally informed well in advance.

Shashi Tharoor

The Highrange Rural Development Society (HRDS), an NGO working in the field of rural development, selected Tharoor for the award, which is scheduled to be presented in Delhi on Wednesday.

The announcement sparked criticism from several Congress leaders, who openly opposed Tharoor receiving an award in Savarkar's name. Following the backlash, Tharoor clarified that he had no prior knowledge of the selection.

"I have come to know from media reports that I have been named a recipient of the Veer Savarkar award. I only learned about this announcement yesterday (Tuesday) in Kerala, where I had gone to vote in the local self-government elections. It was irresponsible on the part of the organisers to announce my name without my having agreed to receive it," Tharoor said in a social media post.

HRDS secretary Aji Krishnan said Tharoor had been informed in advance. "Jury chairman Ravi Kanth IAS met Tharoor at his residence and conveyed his selection. He has not yet indicated that he will decline it. It is possible that he changed his stance after some Congress leaders tried to make the matter controversial," Krishnan said.

EPS named AIADMK's 2026 CM face

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Putting its seal of approval on the alliance with the BJP, the AIADMK General Council on Wednesday passed a resolution declaring general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS) as the chief ministerial candidate for the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections.

The party also utilised the meeting to assert its dominance in the NDA by vesting 'full and absolute authority' in Palaniswami to determine coalition partners, exercise complete control over seat-sharing arrangements, and shape a winnable alliance framework – a clear message to the BJP that it cannot dictate terms all the time.

The meeting also stayed firm on not re-admitting rebel leaders such as V K Sasikala, T T V Dhinakaran, and O Panneerselvam, but opened the door for them to join the NDA but with a caveat. Anyone joining the alliance has to accept the leadership of Palaniswami and align with the common goal of defeating the DMK, one of the resolutions passed in the meeting said.

Though OPS might be willing to join the NDA at the prodding of the BJP, the AIADMK's reassertion is sure to alienate Dhinakaran, who is adamant that he will not accept the leadership of Palaniswami.

"With decades of proven administrative capability, the AIADMK will anchor an NDA-led alliance committed to safeguarding democratic values and ensuring the welfare of the people...The council unanimously declared that the forthcoming electoral battle will be led by the AIADMK," one of the resolutions said.

As many as 11 of the 16 resolutions tore into the DMK on a slew of issues. One asked the Centre to approve metro projects to Madurai and Coimbatore.

"The NDA will win 210 seats. The AIADMK will form a majority government on its own," Palaniswami said, contradicting BJP leaders who continue to maintain that there will be a coalition government if the NDA were to win the elections.

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami being felicitated during the party's General Council Meeting, in Chennai, on Wednesday. PTI

MAKING IT OFFICIAL

- The council approves continuation of the AIADMK-led NDA and endorsed an alliance with the BJP.
- It resolved not to re-admit rebels Sasikala, Dhinakaran & Panneerselvam, but left room for them to join the NDA under conditions.
- A resolution said only parties accepting the alliance's leadership and objectives would be included.

Luthras booked Thailand tickets as fire raged at Goa nightclub

PANAJI, PTI: Saurabh Luthra and Gaurav Luthra, the main accused and owners of the Goa nightclub where a massive blaze claimed 25 lives, booked tickets to Thailand within an hour of learning about the fire at their establishment, officials said on Wednesday.

According to the investigation by Goa Police, the brothers booked their tickets for Phuket in Thailand through a travel portal at 1.17 am of December 7.

At this time, police and administration were battling the blaze at the nightclub 'Birch by Romeo Lane' at Arpora in North Goa, and trying to rescue their staff.

No interim relief

On Wednesday, the Luthras failed to get an interim relief as a Delhi court posted their plea for an anticipatory bail for Thursday.

The Luthra brothers said they are only licensees and not the actual owners of the building where the club was located.

They have sought four weeks of transit anticipatory bail so that they are not immediately arrested after they return to Delhi from Thailand. They have also sought interim protection from arrest.

During the hearing on the transit anticipatory bail pleas, one of the lawyers appearing for the brothers refuted the allegation that they had fled and said they had gone to Thailand for a business meeting.

He said no liability could be attributed to them, even vicariously.

"My other restaurants have been bulldozed. The authorities and even the fourth estate are baying for my blood," the advocate said.

Contempt power not 'personal armour' for judges: SC

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said courts must remain conscious while exercising the contempt jurisdiction that this power is neither a personal armour for judges nor a sword to silence criticism.

The observation came from a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta that remitted a one-week sentence imposed on a woman by the Bombay High Court in a suo motu criminal contempt matter.

The apex court said mercy must remain an integral part of the judicial conscience, to be extended where the contemnor sincerely acknowledges his lapse and seeks to atone for it.

It said the power to punish necessarily carries within it the concomitant power to forgive, where the individual before the court demonstrates genuine remorse and repentance for the act that has brought him to this position.

"Courts must remain conscious that this power is not a personal armour for judges nor a sword to silence criticism. After all, it requires fortitude to acknowledge contrition for one's lapse, and an even greater virtue to extend forgiveness to the erring," it said.

The verdict came on an appeal against the HC's April 23 order holding the appellant guilty of criminal contempt of court.

GLOBAL GLOW

Intangible Cultural Heritage: Deepavali lights up Unesco list

NEW DELHI, PTI

India's Deepavali was on Wednesday inscribed on Unesco's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, sparking celebrations on earning the coveted tag.

The decision was taken during a key meeting of Unesco being hosted at the Red Fort in Delhi.

Chants of 'Jai Hind', 'Vande Mataram' and 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' rent the air as Unesco announced that the festival has been added to the prestigious list after a discussion by its committee.

Artists dressed in different traditional attire performed in front of the main stage while images of the Deepavali festival played on the big screen.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed the addition of Deepavali to Unesco's Intangible Heritage List, saying it will contribute to the festival's global popularity.

"People in India and around the world are thrilled," PM Modi said in a post on X, responding to a post from Unesco listing Deepavali in its intangible heritage list.

Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat delivered a statement on behalf of the country right after the inscription was announced during the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

This is the sixteenth element from India to be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Fifteen other elements already inscribed include the Kumbh Mela, Durga Puja of Kolkata, Garba dance of Gujarat, yoga, the tradition of Vedic chanting and Ramlila.

Don't employ or sell land to unknown people: Assam CM

GUWAHATI, DHNS: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday urged people not to sell land or offer employment to "unknown" individuals while inaugurating a martyr's memorial honouring 860 Assamese who died during the anti-foreigners movement or the Assam Agitation 40 years ago.

"The unknown people entered our Nam Ghars, satras, Kaziranga, killed the rhinos and tried to eliminate our pride. The indigenous people in Goalpara and Dhubri districts have been reduced to minorities. They also occupied the land of our holy Batadrava Than," Sarma told the crowd, which included family members of the Assam Agitation Martyrs.

Martyr's Day marks the death anniversary of Khargeswar Talukdar, the first victim of the six-year agitation (1979-85). The Assam Agitation was a fight against the 'infiltrators' from neighbouring East Pakistan or present-day Bangladesh.

Sarma said the BJP government has been taking several steps to check the threats from the "unknown" people.

"We have cleared lakhs of bighas of forests and government land by evicting encroachers, but the government can't remove all threats. I urge you to pledge not to sell land or give employment to unknown people," he said.

POSH Act applies beyond departments, rules SC

Court warns against forcing complainants to approach 'alien workplaces'

NEW DELHI, PTI

The Supreme Court held on Wednesday that the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) formed in one department can entertain a complaint of sexual harassment under the POSH Act against an employee of a different department.

A bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi said a narrow interpretation of the provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act would undermine its remedial social welfare intent since it would create significant practical hurdles for the aggrieved woman.

"The phrase 'where the respondent is an employee', as contained in section 11 of the POSH Act, cannot be interpreted to mean that ICC proceedings against a 'respondent' may only be instituted before the ICC constituted at the workplace of the 'respondent'," the bench said.

The court said a narrow interpretation would beget several procedural and psychological barriers for the aggrieved woman.

"The aggrieved woman, who has allegedly suffered an act of sexual harassment, would be compelled to file a complaint before the ICC constituted at the workplace of the 'respondent'. It would create a situation where the aggrieved woman would have to appear before the ICC at an alien workplace in order to pursue her remedy in law," the bench said.

The top court said in case the ICC constituted at the aggrieved woman's workplace is conducting a fact-finding inquiry under the POSH Act, the employer of the accused, even if it is a different department, must abide by its duties under section 19(f) of the POSH Act and swiftly cooperate and make available information upon a request by the ICC formed at the aggrieved woman's workplace.

The apex court's judgment came on a plea filed by a 2010-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, challenging a notice issued by the ICC.

A 2004-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who was, at the relevant time, posted as the joint secretary at the Department of Food and Public Distribution alleged that on May 15, 2023, the IRS officer sexually harassed her at her workplace.

Subsequently, a complaint under the POSH Act was presented before the ICC constituted under section 9 of the Act at the aggrieved woman's department. The IRS officer moved the Central Administrative Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi. However, the CAT dismissed his plea. Thereafter, he approached the Delhi HC.

The high court upheld the CAT's judgment.

Delhi riots: SC reserves order on bail pleas of Umar, others

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday reserved its verdict on bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others in the UAPA case related to the alleged conspiracy behind the February 2020 riots in Delhi.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N V Anjaria heard arguments from Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, Additional Solicitor General S V Raju and senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Singhvi, Siddhartha Dave, Salman Khurshid and Sidharth Luthra.

Strongly opposing the bail pleas of activist Umar, Sharjeel and the others, the Delhi Police had said the February 2020 riots in Delhi were not something spontaneous, but an "orchestrated, preplanned and well-designed" attack on the sovereignty of India.

Umar, Sharjeel and other accused were booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), anti-terror law and provisions of the erstwhile IPC for allegedly being the "masterminds" of the 2020 riots, which left 53 people dead and over 700 injured.

The violence erupted during widespread protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The accused have moved the Supreme Court challenging the Delhi High Court's September 2 order denying them bail in the "larger conspiracy" case of the February 2020 riots.

11 Maoists with Rs 82 lakh reward surrender in Maha

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
GADCHIROLI, DHNS

In a major step toward ending Naxalism by March 31, 2026, 11 hardcore CPI (Maoist) cadres, including a close aide of top commander Madvi Hidma and another wanted in 43 encounters, surrendered before the Gadchiroli Police on Wednesday.

The surrendered Maoists carried a combined reward of Rs 82 lakh on their heads.

The 11 who surrendered include two Divisional Committee Members (DVCMs) Ramesh alias Bhima alias Baju Guddi Lekami (57) and Bhima alias Situ alias Kiran Hidama Kowasi (35).

Baju Guddi faced 88 cases in Gadchiroli, including 43 encounters, eight arsons and 37 other offences.

"Naxalism is nearing its end... it is just a matter of time," Maharashtra DGP Rashmi Shukla told *DH*, after formally accepting the surrender at the Gadchiroli Police complex. "This year alone, over 100 Naxals have surrendered before Gadchiroli Police," she said, urging remaining cadres to lay down arms and rejoin democratic society.

Four of the surrendered cadres are women. They also handed over four firearms to the police.

"These surrenders are a major blow to the Maoist movement in Gadchiroli and across the Dandakaranya region," Gadchiroli SP Neelotpal said, noting that 783 active Maoists have surrendered to Gadchiroli Police under the state's surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy.

Hidma, one of India's most wanted Maoist commanders, and his wife Madakam Raje were killed in an encounter on November 18.

On October 15, senior CPI (Maoist) leader and Politburo member Mallojula Venugopal Rao alias Bhupathi alias Sonu, along with 61 senior cadre, surrendered before Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

On January 1, Bhupathi's wife, Vimala Chandra Sidam alias Tarakka, a member of the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, had surrendered before Fadnavis.

If a group of Maoists surrenders, a total reward of Rs 10 lakh has been announced as collective assistance by the central and Maharashtra governments for their rehabilitation.

Rape-accused Kerala MLA, believed to be hiding in Karnataka, gets anticipatory bail

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: In a relief to Kerala MLA Rahul Mamkootathil, who is accused in two rape cases, a court in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday granted him anticipatory bail in one of the cases, while he had earlier received interim protection from arrest in the other.

Mamkootathil, who had been absconding since the first case was registered against him on November 28, is likely to appear to cast his vote in the second phase of the local body poll at Palakkad on Thursday.

The state government is learnt to be taking swift action to file an appeal against the anticipatory bail, particularly as it is already facing criticism over the police's failure to arrest Mamkootathil.

He was believed to be hiding in Karnataka, and CPM leaders have alleged that some Congress leaders in the state were providing him shelter.

Mamkootathil was expelled from the Congress after the police registered a rape case against him.

In one of the complaints, a woman alleged that Mamkootathil sexually abused her by promising marriage and later even forced her to terminate a pregnancy.

Another woman living in Bengaluru alleged that the Palakkad MLA brutally raped her after giving a false promise of marriage.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

MAYA SAYS YOU'VE BEEN VLOGGING ABOUT HER PASTRIES
YES, I'M SPOTLIGHTING THE HEALTHY-SOUNDING ONES... LIKE CARROT CAKE!
ALSO, HER LEMON AND PISTACHIO CAKES! THEY ALMOST SOUND NONFATTENING, RIGHT?
I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THE NONFATTENING PART!
HUMOR ME, MOM...I'M ON A ROLL HERE!

Hagar The Horrible

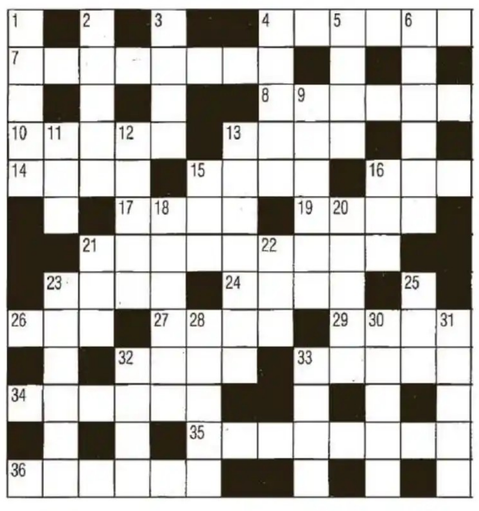
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

I HEAR YOUR BROTHER SPIKE IS COMING TO VISIT
NOT TO VISIT, TO STAY! THE COYOTES KICKED HIM OUT... HE HATES TO LEAVE NEEDLES...
ALTHOUGH, HE HASN'T FELT WELL LATELY... HE'S LOST WEIGHT AGAIN, AND HE'S BEEN DEPRESSED...
I KNOW THAT FEELING... I'M ALWAYS AFRAID I'M GOING TO OUTLIVE MY TEETH!

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12307



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
4 Hurtful fellow wrongly said to be a saint (6)
7 Set off to be an expert ticket seller (5,3)
8 Computerised version of "one-nil" (2-4)
10 Old-fashioned father holding what's latest but not last (5)
13 Not so hot, perhaps, but OK (4)
14 Observers of a key agreement (4)
15 Youngster with whom a senior officer's not finished (4)
16 With a cry, he comes to a sticky end (3)
17 An old jalopy that means a lot (4)
19 View a fare revision with alarm (4)
21 A capital advantage, initially? (4,5)
23 Makes a hash of something heavenly (4)
24 Musical instrument by post, perhaps (4)
26 Rob him as an outlaw! (3)
27 Shot out of the job-centre in the city (4)
29 They're cold in the nicest way (4)
32 Gather some more apples (4)
33 Was inclined to have a spare tin opener (5)
34 Have recourse to switching the roster (6)
35 No longer saucily, but really well (8)
36 Stay awhile on the American college grounds (6)

DOWN
1 Different ideas in drama (5)
2 Beat for taking a step in the wrong direction (5)
3 Multiplication stable (4)
4 Seat possibly lost around mid-October (5)
5 A pretty small figure (4)
6 Being poor, is always doing the wrong thing (6)
9 Near a ton-up much of the way (3,3)
11 Yes, it's often doubled, sir (3)
12 Where not all eyes are on the woman getting a place (5)
13 A policeman's station, as some might say (3,4)
15 The bounder has three keys! (3)
16 Derby, perhaps (3)
18 Annual letter to Daisy? (6)
20 He and I take a bird out (5)
21 It's marketed near Piccadilly Circus (3)
22 Play to a happy ending (3)
23 Moaned sadly somewhere in Italy (6)
25 In "EastEnders", is he a reformed character? (3)
28 Estimates the charges (5)
30 See a set, possibly as a social group (5)
31 Keeps with a ship touring a river (5)
32 Play about or upset an MP (4)
33 They're terminologically inexact (4)

ACROSS
4 Spatter (6)
7 Blameless (8)
8 Landed property (6)
10 Not fresh (5)
13 Tidings (4)
14 Accept (4)
15 Small rodent (4)
16 Gave food to (3)
17 Principal (4)
19 Unemployment benefit (4)
21 Religious retreat (9)
23 Swindles (4)
24 Be inclined (4)
26 Aggressive youth (3)
27 Timber (4)
29 Water jug (4)
32 Pile (4)
33 A play (5)
34 Detests vehemently (6)
35 Blows air into (8)
36 Rank (6)

DOWN
1 Opposite of last (5)
2 Move furtively (5)
3 Dull pain (4)
4 Iron alloy (5)
5 Permits (4)
6 Couch (6)
9 Country (6)
11 Levy (3)
12 Fruit (5)
13 Uninterrupted (7)
15 By way of (3)
16 Insect (3)
18 Solution (6)
20 Sequence (5)
21 Lawless crowd (3)
22 Boy's name (3)
23 Battle (6)
25 Jewel (3)
28 Fertile spot (5)
30 Fritter away (5)
31 Lift (5)
32 Owl's cry (4)
33 Cloudy (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12306

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1, Co-up-le 7, Charlton 8, Di-sh 10, O-port-O 11, Scraps 14, Ney 16, Katie 17, She'd 19, Matey 21, Bi-go-t 22, Mungo 23, Heal 26, Sabot 28, Cur 29, Clutch 30, Man RA-y 31, Opts 32, Pondered 33, Stress.
DOWN: 1, Colon(i.e.)s 2, Pa-ired 3, Echo 4, Cricket 5, Stoat 6, Anise 8, D-one 9, Sty 12, Ray 13, Pinta 15, Ba-GG-y 18, Hal-Al 19, Min. 20, To-O 21, Butcher 22, MOT 23, Hunter 24, E-rr-S 25, Layers 26, S-cop-e 27, Bunny 28, Cap 30, Mods.

EASY
ACROSS: 1, Cha-cha 7, Lollipop 8, Rota 10, Abuses 11, Locate 14, Bee 16, Votes 17, East 19, Rodeo 21, Ruler 22, Pagan 23, Rasp 26, Tepid 28, Her 29, Origin 30, Facial 31, Amid 32, Attracts 33, Themes.
DOWN: 1, Create 2, Closet 3, Alas 4, All over 5, Sprat 6, Spies 8, Rubs 9, Tee 12, Coo 13, Tears 15, Solar 18, After 19, Rug 20, Den 21, Radical 22, Pig 23, Recipe 24, Arid 25, Pilots 26, Total 27, Piste 28, Ham 30, Fast.

◆SU-DO-KU-6774◆

2		6	3		4			
		7					3	
	4				2			6
	8	3	1			9		5
1		9			5	6	7	
4			9				8	
	9					3		
			7		6	4		9

very hard

3	5	8	4	7	2	9	1	6
9	6	2	5	8	1	7	4	3
4	7	1	3	6	9	8	5	2
5	9	7	8	4	3	6	2	1
1	2	4	7	9	6	3	8	5
6	8	3	2	1	5	4	7	9
7	1	9	6	5	8	2	3	4
2	4	6	1	3	7	5	9	8
8	3	5	9	2	4	1	6	7

SOLUTION TO 6773

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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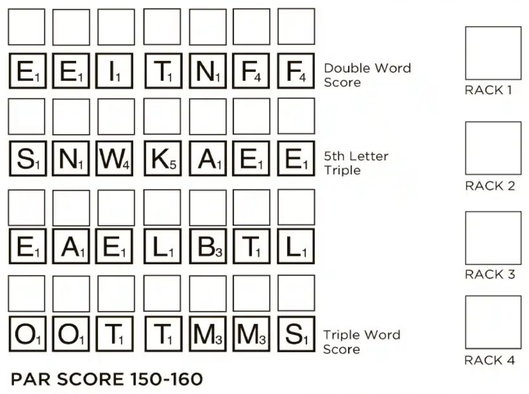

E1 E1 I1 T1 N1 F4 F4
Double Word Score
S1 N1 W4 K5 A1 E1 E1
5th Letter Triple
E1 A1 E1 L1 B3 T1 L1
O1 O1 T1 T1 M3 M3 S1
Triple Word Score
RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4

PAR SCORE 150-160
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

P3 R1 I1 N1 T1 S1
U1 S1 U1 R1 E1 R1
D2 E1 L1 T1 A1 I1 C3
D2 E1 F4 I1 C3 I1 T1

RACK 1 = 8
RACK 2 = 6
RACK 3 = 62
RACK 4 = 89
JUDD'S TOTAL 165

PAR SCORE 110-120

HITORI-3228

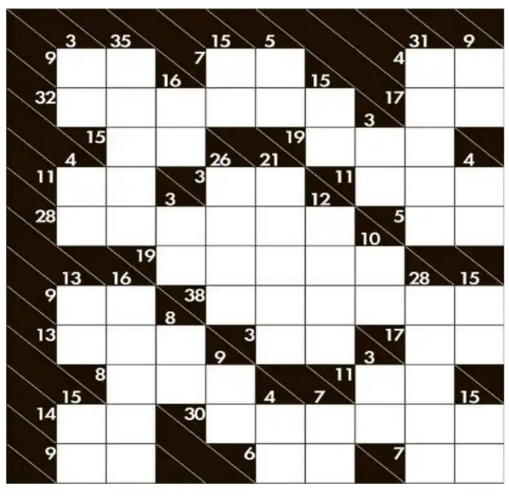
3	8	3	4	4	4	6	1
2	4	1	7	5	6	4	8
7	5	4	3	8	5	1	4
8	4	7	6	4	4	2	3
1	2	5	4	7	8	4	5
4	4	6	1	8	2	8	5
6	1	4	5	6	3	5	2
6	4	4	2	4	1	5	4

SOLUTION TO 3227

6	■	7	5	3	■	4	8
7	4	1	■	8	5	6	■
2	■	5	4	6	■	8	1
■	1	6	7	■	2	■	4
3	5	■	6	2	4	7	■
8	■	2	■	7	■	1	5
5	6	4	2	■	1	■	7
■	2	■	8	1	7	3	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3228



SOLUTION TO 3227

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3762

						3	5	6
9	4				6			
7	8				5	4		
	1	5	6		4			3
								9
			2				8	
							3	

SOLUTION TO 3761

7	8	2	6	5	4	9	1	3
4	9	5	2	3	1	8	7	6
6	1	3	7	9	8	5	2	4
9	4	8	1	2	6	3	5	7
5	7	6	9	4	3	1	8	2
2	3	1	8	7	5	6	4	9
8	6	9	4	1	7	2	3	5
3	2	7	5	8	9	4	6	1
1	5	4	3	6	2	7	9	8

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RNFOT
ANGTI
LIVNIO
WOHGTR

I've gotta go. There are bunch of half-off signs that need my help.
I know! Those "Everything for a dollar!" stores are running me ragged.
You guys work too hard. My job's easy.
THE ZERO LOVED HIS JOB BECAUSE THERE WAS ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ORBIT GAUGE SEASON HEALTH
Answer: They asked if she would take a photo of them on the beach, and she said — "SHORE" THING

US plans to scrutinise foreign tourists' social media history

Move sparks concerns of privacy and government surveillance

NYT NEWS SERVICE

Travellers visiting the United States from countries such as Britain, France, Germany and South Korea could soon be required to undergo a review of up to five years of their social media history, according to a proposal filed on Tuesday by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

The change would affect visitors eligible for the visa waiver programme, which allows citizens from 42 countries to travel to the United States for up to 90 days without a visa, provided they first obtain an electronic travel authorisation.

In a document published Tuesday in the Federal Register, CBP said it plans to ask applicants for an extensive list of personal data, including social media information, email addresses from the past decade, and the names, birth dates, places of residence and birthplaces of parents, spouses, siblings and children.

Under the current system, applicants from visa waiver countries must enrol in the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) programme. They pay US$40 and submit an email address, home address, phone number and emergency contact details. The authorisation remains valid for two years.

This move from CBP follows similar measures by the US government to conduct social media reviews for certain visa applicants, including H-1B visa seekers and applicants for student and scholar visas. It also aligns with the government's pending plan to collect a new US$250 "visa integrity" fee from many visitors, although those from visa waiver countries are exempt.

The travel industry has pushed back against the visa integrity fee. In November, a coalition of more than 20 tourism and travel businesses signed a letter opposing the fee, warning it could discourage millions of international visitors from travelling to the United States, including those planning to attend events such as next year's World Cup.

A travel industry official, speaking anonymously because his organisation had not yet reviewed the proposal, said CBP had not briefed industry stakeholders on the plan, calling it a significant escalation in traveller vetting.

According to the notice, CBP will accept 60 days of public comments on the proposal.

If approved, CBP could introduce the changes gradually over the following weeks and months, the immigration law firm Fragomen said in an advisory. Bo Cooper, a partner at Fragomen, described the government's new approach to social media screening as a "paradigm shift" from the previous use of online posts merely to verify specific facts, such as criminal activity.

"The new method involves looking at online speech, and then denying travel based on discretion and policy about the kinds of things that get said," Cooper said.

People wait outside the US embassy after their visa appointments were cancelled in Bogota, Colombia. The Trump administration has been tightening visa rules since January 2025. AFP FILE

TRAVEL VETTING

- US plans mandatory social media screening for visa-waiver travellers, requiring up to five years of online history plus extensive personal data
- Change marks a major tightening of US entry vetting, raising concerns from the travel industry and digital rights groups about privacy, delays and free-speech risks.
- CBP will open a 60-day public comment period, after which the expanded data checks could be rolled out gradually.

Fact-check group says 'deeply concerned' over US visa curbs

The International Fact-Checking Network said it is "deeply concerned" by reports that the US State Department instructed staff to deny visas to people who have worked in fact-checking and content moderation, AFP reports from Washington.

"This work strengthens public debate - it does not censor it," the organisation said in a statement. "It is protected within the United States by the First Amendment (of the Constitution), and the US has long supported similar press freedoms internationally."

Court allows US govt to unseal Epstein records

NEW YORK, AP/PTI: Secret grand jury transcripts from Jeffrey Epstein's 2019 sex trafficking case can be made public, a judge ruled on Wednesday, joining two other judges in granting the Justice Department's requests to unseal material from investigations into the late financier's sexual abuse.

US District Judge Richard M Berman reversed his earlier decision to keep the material under wraps, citing a new law that requires the government to open its files on Epstein and his longtime confidant Ghislaine Maxwell.

The judge previously cautioned that the 70 or so pages of grand jury materials slated for release are hardly revelatory.

On Tuesday, a different Manhattan federal judge ordered the release of records from Maxwell's 2021 sex trafficking case.

Last week, a judge in Florida approved the unsealing of transcripts from an abandoned Epstein federal grand jury investigation in the 2000s.

The Justice Department asked the judges to lift secrecy orders after the Epstein Files Transparency Act, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump last month, created a narrow exception to rules that normally keep grand jury proceedings confidential.

The law requires that the Justice Department disclose Epstein-related records to the public by December 19.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Greek farmers from the Thessaly region, protesting over the delayed payment of European Union subsidies, drive their tractors at the port area of the city of Volos, on Wednesday. REUTERS

S Korea to require advertisers to label AI-generated ads

▸ South Korea will require advertisers to label their ads made with artificial intelligence technologies from next year as it seeks to curb a surge of deceptive promotions featuring fabricated experts or deep-faked celebrities endorsing food or pharmaceutical products on social media, AP/PTI reports from Seoul.

Following a policy meeting chaired by Prime Minister Kim Min-seok on Wednesday, officials said they will ramp up screening and removal of problematic AI-generated ads and impose punitive fines, citing growing risks to consumers — especially older people who struggle to tell whether content is AI-made. Lee Dong-hoon, director of economic and financial policy at the Office for Government Policy Coordination, said in a briefing that such ads are "disrupting the market order," and that "swift action is now essential." "Anyone who creates, edits, and posts AI-generated photos or videos will be required to label them as AI-made, and the users of the platform will be prohibited from removing or tampering with those labels," he said.

Sudanese military plane crashes

▸ A Sudanese military aircraft crashed while attempting to land in the east of the country, killing all the crew, military officials said on Wednesday, in the latest plane crash in the war-torn African nation, AP/PTI reports from Cairo.

The Ilyushin Il-76 cargo plane experienced technical failure while attempting to land on Tuesday in the Osman Digna Air Base in the coastal city of Port Sudan, two officials said. They said the crew were killed but didn't disclose how many personnel were on board. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to brief the media. Among the dead was military pilot Omran Mirghani, according to his uncle, prominent Sudanese journalist Osman Mirghani, who mourned his nephew's death on social media.

Trump repeats claim of 'ending' India-Pak war

NEW YORK/PENNSYLVANIA, PTI: US President Donald Trump said India and Pakistan "were going at it" and that he ended the conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, repeating the claim once again.

Trump has now repeated the assertion nearly 70 times that he stopped the conflict in May between India and Pakistan.

"In 10 months, I ended eight wars, including Kosovo (and) Serbia, Pakistan and India — they were going at it. Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia... Armenia and Azerbaijan," Trump said on Tuesday in remarks to supporters at a rally on the economy in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania.

India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation for the April 22 Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

India has consistently denied any third-party intervention in resolving the conflict.

Meanwhile, Trump said Cambodia and Thailand have started fighting again and that "tomorrow" he will make a phone call to those countries.

Machado's daughter accepts Peace Nobel in her stead

Venezuela Opposition leader Machado is in hiding since her brief detention in Jan

OSLO, AP/PTI

Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado's daughter accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on her mother's behalf Wednesday, hours after officials said Machado would miss the ceremony.

Machado has been in hiding and has not been seen in public since January 9, when she was briefly detained after joining supporters in a protest in Caracas, Venezuela's national capital.

Jorgen Watne Frydnes, chair of the Norwegian Nobel committee, told the award ceremony that "Maria Corina Machado has done everything in her power to be able to attend the ceremony here today — a journey in a situation of extreme danger."

"Although she will not be able to reach this ceremony and today's events, we are profoundly happy to confirm that she is safe, and that she will be with us here in Oslo," he said to applause.

The director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute and Machado's spokesperson said earlier Wednesday that she wouldn't be able to attend the ceremony. Her daughter Ana Corina Sosa did instead.

Maria Corina Machado said in an audio recording of a phone call published on the Nobel website that many people had "risked their lives" for her to arrive in Oslo.

"I am very grateful to them, and this is a measure of what this recognition means to the Venezuelan people," she said.

"And since this is a prize for all Venezuelans, I believe that it will be received by them."

Ana Corina Sosa (right), daughter of Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Machado, receives the Nobel Peace Prize for her mother at the Oslo City Hall in Norway on Wednesday. AFP

We must be willing to fight for freedom: Machado

Venezuela's opposition leader Maria Corina Machado on Wednesday said that Venezuelans had shown that "we must be willing to fight for freedom," in a speech delivered by her daughter, who accepted the prize in her absence in Oslo, AFP reports from Oslo. "What we Venezuelans can offer the world is the lesson forged through this long and difficult journey: that to have democracy, we must be willing to fight for freedom," Machado's daughter, Ana Corina Sosa Machado, said.

Ukraine ready to hold elections if security is ensured, says Zelenskyy

KYIV (UKRAINE), AP/PTI

Ukrainian officials were expected to hand their latest peace proposals to United States negotiators on Wednesday, according to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who also said Ukraine would be ready for elections within three months if partners can guarantee a safe vote during wartime and if its electoral law can be amended.

Zelenskyy was responding to comments by US President Donald Trump, who questioned Ukraine's democracy and suggested the Ukrainian leader was using the war as an excuse not to hold an election.

Zelenskyy told reporters late Tuesday that he is "ready" for an election but would need help from the US and possibly Europe to ensure security for a vote to take place. He said Ukraine could be ready to hold balloting in 60 to 90 days if those conditions are met.

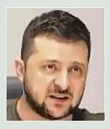
"To hold elections, two issues must be addressed: primarily, security — how to conduct them, how to do it under strikes, under missile attacks; and a question regarding our military — how they would vote," Zelenskyy said.

"And the second issue is the legislative framework required to ensure the legitimacy of elections," he said.

Previously, Zelenskyy noted that a ballot cannot legally take place while martial law, imposed due to Russia's invasion nearly four years ago, remains in force. He has also questioned how a vote could occur when civilian areas are being bombarded by Russia and almost 20 per cent of the country is under Russian occupation.

Zelenskyy said he has asked lawmakers from his party in Parliament to draw up legislative proposals that would allow elections while Ukraine remains under martial law. Ukrainians have generally supported Zelenskyy's position, and there has been no public pressure in Ukraine for an election. Under the current Ukrainian law, his rule is legitimate.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY
Ukraine president



"To hold elections, two issues must be addressed: primarily, security – how to conduct them, how to do it under strikes, under missile attacks; and a question regarding our military – how they would vote.

France's former President Nicolas Sarkozy arrives for an autograph session of his book "Diary of a Prisoner" on the day of its' release at the Lamartine bookshop in Paris on Wednesday. AFP

Indian-origin nurse jailed for rape

▸ A 47-year-old nurse from Kerala has been sentenced to seven years and nine months' imprisonment after pleading guilty to rape and sexual assault offences at a care home in Scotland, PTI reports from London.

Naijil Paul, a British national, admitted to raping a vulnerable colleague and sexually assaulting two other women while he was the manager of a care home in North Lanarkshire over seven years ago. He was charged with the offences in 2018 and fled to Kochi just before his trial in December 2019. In October this year, Paul pleaded guilty to the offences after his extradition from India and was sentenced at the High Court in Glasgow on Monday.

Israel to expand settlements

▸ Israel has given the go-ahead for the construction of 764 more houses in three Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, a decision that's likely to further stoke tensions in the Palestinian territory, AP/PTI reports from Jerusalem.

Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said Wednesday that the Higher Planning Council, the body in charge of settlement construction plans in the West Bank, approved 478, 230, and 56 housing units in the Hashmonaim, Beitar Illit and Givat Ze'ev settlements, respectively. Smotrich, who formulates settlement policy and is a settler himself, called the council's decision part of a "clear strategic move to strengthen settlement and ensure continuity of life, security and growth".

First rain of autumn falls in drought-hit Tehran

TEHRAN, AP/PTI

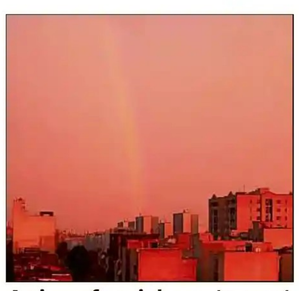
Rain fell for the first time in months in Iran's capital on Wednesday, offering brief respite for the parched Islamic Republic as it suffers through the driest autumn in more than half a century.

The drought gripping Iran has led its president to warn that the government may need to relocate from Tehran by the end of December if there is no significant rainfall to recharge dams around the capital. Meteorologists have described this autumn as the driest in over 50 years across the country — even before the 1979 Islamic Revolution — further straining a system that expends vast amounts of water inefficiently on agriculture.

The water crisis has also become a political issue, particularly as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly offered help to Iran, a nation he launched a 12-day war against in June. Water shortages have sparked localised protests in the past, something Iran is trying to avoid as its economy struggles under international sanctions over its nuclear programme.

"The water crisis in Iran has, in recent years, escalated from a recurring drought issue into a profound political and security problem that has the regime leadership concerned," the New York-based Soufan Center said.

The drought has been widely discussed across Tehran and the rest of Iran, from government officials speaking openly to visiting journalists to households purchasing water tanks.



A view of a rainbow at sunset following several days of rain in Tehran on Wednesday. AFP

CULTURAL HONOUR

Italian cooking and its rituals get UN designation as world heritage

ROME, AP/PTI

Italian food is known and loved around the world for its fresh ingredients and palate-pleasing tastes, but on Wednesday, the UN's cultural agency gave foodies another reason to celebrate their pizza, pasta and tiramisu by listing Italian cooking as part of the world's "intangible" cultural heritage.

UNESCO added the rituals surrounding Italian food preparation and consumption to its list of the world's traditional practices and expressions. It is a designation celebrated alongside the better-known UNESCO list of world heritage sites, on which Italy is prominently represented with locations such as Rome's Colosseum and the ancient city of Pompeii.

The citation did not mention specific dishes, recipes or regional specialities but highlighted the cultural importance Italians place on the rituals of cooking and eating: the Sunday family lunch, the tradition of grandmothers teaching grandchildren how to fold tortellini dough just so, and the act of coming together to share a meal.

"Cooking is a gesture of love, a way in which we tell something about ourselves to others and how we take care of others," said Pier Luigi Petrillo, a member of the Italian UNESCO campaign and professor of comparative law at Rome's La Sapienza University. "This tradition of being at the table, of stopping for a while at lunch, a bit longer at dinner, and even longer for big occasions, is not very common around the world," he said.

Premier Giorgia Meloni celebrated the designation, which she said honoured Italians and their national identity.

Colombian singer Shakira performs during her 'Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran World Tour' concert in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Tuesday. REUTERS

US court reverses $1 bn damages ruling against Byju Raveendran

Orders fresh phase of proceedings in Jan 2026

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Delaware Court has reversed the $1 billion judgment against Ed-Tech firm Byju's founder, Byju Raveendran, after he made fresh submissions in a motion to correct the November 20, 2025, judgment. The founders of Think and Learn Pvt Ltd, the parent company of Byju's, in a statement said the US court agreed that damages had not been determined and ordered a new phase to commence in January 2026 to determine any damages related to claims against Raveendran.

Last month, in a petition filed by Byju's Alpha (Byju's established a US subsidiary Byju's Alpha in 2021 to receive proceeds of Term Loan) and US-based lender GLAS Trust Company, the Delaware Bankruptcy Court slapped Raveendran with a default judgment of over $1 billion, after finding that he repeatedly ignored its orders and also failed to participate in the proceedings.

The founders said Raveendran is considering further action against GLAS Trust and others.

Byju Raveendran

"The significance of the court's decision to amend the judgment cannot be overstated. Byju Raveendran today has not been found liable to pay a single dollar in damages to the plaintiffs. During the damages proceedings starting January 2026, we intend to demonstrate to the court that not only have the plaintiffs suffered no damage whatsoever due to actions of Byju Raveendran, but also that the plaintiffs have intentionally misled the court in this proceeding and other adversary proceedings," Michael McNutt, litigation advisor for Byju Raveendran, said.

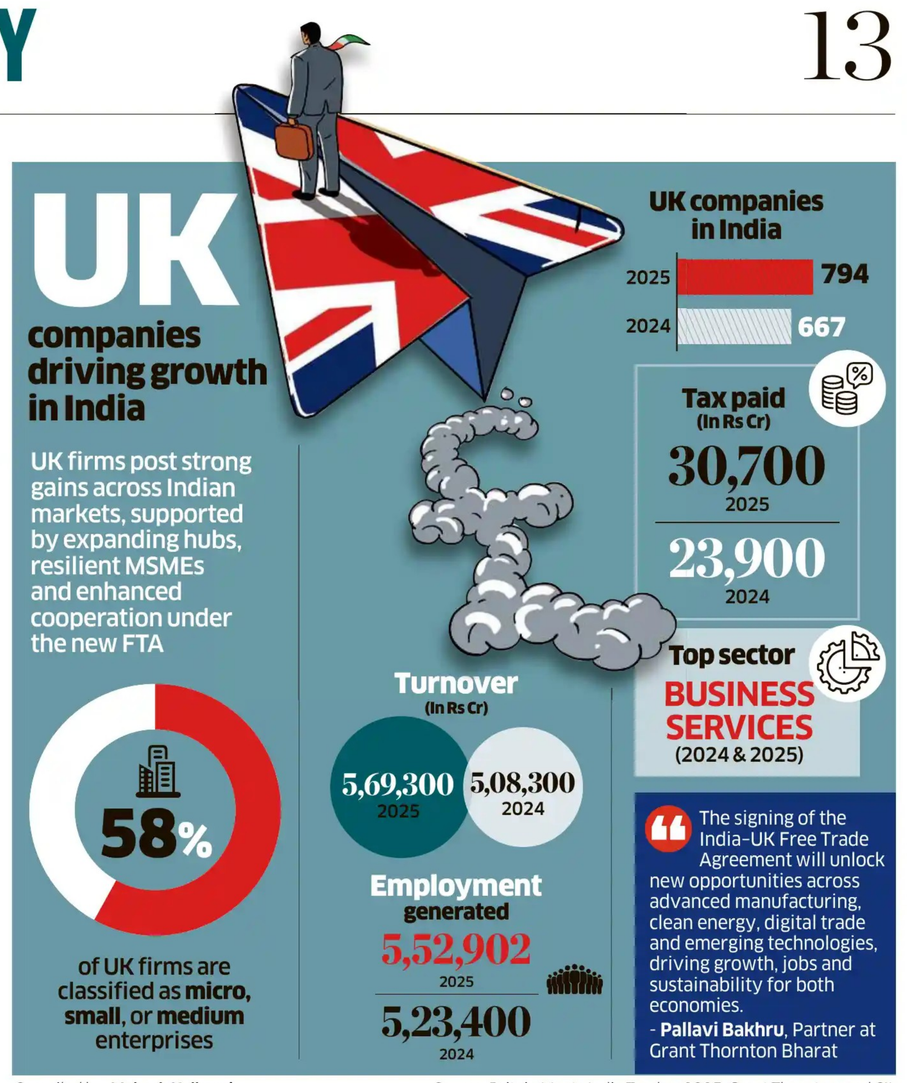
In April this year, Byju's term loan lenders filed a lawsuit against Raveendran, his wife and co-founder Divya Gokulnath and Anita Kishore (former chief strategy officer) in the US Bankruptcy Court.

The lawsuit claimed that each of them co-orchestrated and executed a lawless scheme to "conceal and steal $533 million of loan proceeds". But the founders had said that it was fabricated and baseless allegations.

Byju's Alpha was established to receive proceeds of a $1.5 billion Term Loan B. In mid-2022, it started transferring $533 million of the Alpha Funds to Camshaft Capital Fund. On February 1, 2024, Byju's Alpha filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

In a statement on Wednesday, the founders said, "Related to these Delaware Court proceedings and in a major cross-border legal escalation, Byju Raveendran will submit clinching evidence before the US Courts, proving that GLAS Trust and the Resolution Professional (RP) repeatedly misled the Delaware Court, Indian & other Courts, and the public by falsely alleging that $533 million (Alpha Funds) was diverted by the Founders for their personal benefit. GLAS Trust's sworn statements that it "does not know" where the money went are simply false."

Once valued at $22 billion, edtech firm Byju's' worth became zero in 2024.


UK
companies driving growth in India
UK firms post strong gains across Indian markets, supported by expanding hubs, resilient MSMEs and enhanced cooperation under the new FTA
58%
of UK firms are classified as micro, small, or medium enterprises
UK companies in India
2025 794
2024 667
Tax paid (In Rs Cr)
30,700
2025
23,900
2024
Top sector
BUSINESS SERVICES
(2024 & 2025)
Turnover (In Rs Cr)
5,69,300
2025
5,08,300
2024
Employment generated
5,52,902
2025
5,23,400
2024
The signing of the India-UK Free Trade Agreement will unlock new opportunities across advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital trade and emerging technologies, driving growth, jobs and sustainability for both economies.
- Pallavi Bakhru, Partner at Grant Thornton Bharat
Compiled by: Mahesh Kulkarni
Source: Britain Meets India Tracker 2025, Grant Thornton, and CII

Unacademy in talks for potential M&As

Firm's valuation down to less than $500 million

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Unacademy is now in talks for potential mergers and acquisitions (M&A), as its co-founder Gaurav Munjal said, "If we find a win-win situation where consolidation can lead to a stronger entity, we will go ahead with this."

The Bengaluru-based Ed-Tech company, which has completed 10 years since its official launch, is now valued at under $500 million, compared to $3.5 billion, three years ago. According to reports, UpGrad is in talks to acquire Unacademy in a deal that could value the firm at below $400 million.

"Three years ago, I used to care a lot about this (valuation), which probably led us to make some bad decisions — this chase of valuation. But today, I care more about building great products, having great unit economics, and growing profitably," he said in a post on X.

Gaurav Munjal

In a detailed post, Munjal said, "From the beginning, we always thought of ourselves as a tech company operating in education. Unlike every other player in the market, which behaved like an education company using tech to enable them. That's why we had features like streaks, knowledge hats, and a lot of gamification built in for educators and learners...Then, in 2019, just one year before COVID hit, we launched a subscription product where learners could buy a subscription and get access to live classes from the best educators for their exam."

The product was an instant hit. From zero revenue in January 2019 to $1.8 million revenue in September 2019, it was one of the fastest growing companies to get to almost $20 million Bookings ARR (annual recurring revenue) in nine months, he informed.

The company saw three back-to-back funding rounds, and from being a $100-million valuation at the start of 2019, the startup was at a $1.5-billion valuation by September 2020.

But in 2022, three things happened simultaneously: The entire game changed. The game was no longer about raising funds and showing top-line growth, but it was about profitability; Learners went back to offline centres post-COVID, and "a few competitors copied every single thing about our product and our YouTube playbook and launched a one-tenth cheaper product", he added.

In 2024, as part of the company's efforts to streamline operations and enhance business efficiency, it underwent a restructuring exercise and laid off 250 employees. The company had said it was necessary to consider the company's goals and vision for the year.

Munjal added that the startup is now back to following its initial mission — making great educational products and making them accessible. "In hindsight, the best year for Unacademy was not 2021, it is 2025...A few bad strategic calls set us back by a few years, but I am glad that we are stronger that we ever were," he added in the post.

TCS to buy Coastal Cloud for $700 million

BENGALURU, DHNS: IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has signed an agreement to acquire Coastal Cloud, a Salesforce Summit partner that specialises in Salesforce Consulting for an all-cash consideration of $700 million.

Coastal Cloud is one of the largest 'pure-play' Salesforce partners with strong advisory capabilities, multi-cloud offerings and AI/Agentforce expertise. It has strong growth and profitability profile, deep partnership with Salesforce, experienced and credible leadership team and nearly 400 Salesforce-certified personnel based in the US. Founded in 2012, Coastal Cloud has an over 400-strong client roster, including a strong presence in the mid-market segment, enabling TCS to penetrate this segment.

For TCS, the US is the largest market globally.

With the acquisitions of ListEngage and Coastal Cloud, TCS will be among the top-5 Salesforce advisory and consulting firms, globally.

"This acquisition marks a pivotal milestone in advancing our global Salesforce capabilities and accelerating our AI-led transformation agenda. It is another significant step towards realising TCS's vision of becoming the world's largest AI-led Technology Services company. By adding over 400 multi-cloud specialists with deep industry expertise, we are strengthening our advisory and business consulting capabilities and enhancing our AI and data offerings," TCS Chief Operating Officer Aarthi Subramanian said.

"This is an exciting new chapter for Coastal Cloud, and joining TCS enables us to serve our customers' evolving needs with even greater depth, speed, and scale. Our team's Salesforce and multi-cloud expertise, combined with TCS' global reach, advanced AI capabilities and enterprise scale solutions, will allow us to support customers across a broader spectrum of transformation needs," Coastal Cloud CEO Eric Berridge said.

These acquisitions significantly strengthen TCS' global salesforce aspirations by bringing together comprehensive, multi-cloud Salesforce expertise across industries globally. Additionally, TCS will continue to pursue the M&A agenda aligned with its core priorities in AI, Cloud, Cybersecurity, Digital Engineering and Enterprise Solutions, TCS stated.

Google launches Startups Hub in Hyderabad

SNV SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday launched Google for Startups (GfS) Hub at T-Hub in Hyderabad — set up by the US tech giant and the Telangana government.

Google for Startups Hub is a dedicated space to encourage the vibrant and growing startup ecosystem to scale and deliver world-class innovations. This Hub is the first such centre that has been launched as part of a larger incubation and innovation ecosystem of Telangana. Google plans to engage regional startups from the state through the Hub, including free, year-long dedicated coworking seats for selected AI-first startups and a curated set of venture investors.

Working together, the state government and Google will support AI-first startups, foster talent, and createdirect bridges to international markets.

As part of the global Google for Startups network, the Hub is designed to support startups across their journey from incubation to innovation, providing founders with a combination of physical infrastructure, hands-on mentoring, AI expertise, and global visibility through the network. Startups will find a centre that supports them from early product ideas to scaling AI-first businesses responsibly across India and global markets.

The Google for Startups Hub in Hyderabad will have dedicated infrastructure and technology resources for supported startups selected jointly by Google and the state government. It will also have networking areas and event spaces where founders, tech builders, investors, and ecosystem partners can connect for founder-focused sessions, workshops, market access programmes and community events.

CM Reddy appealed to founders to make use of the Rs 1,000-crore Startup Fund of Funds to be soon launched by the government. Referring to the humble beginnings of Google in 1998, he hoped that at least 100 startups from Hyderabad became unicorns by 2034.

Google India Country Manager Preeti Lobana said that at Google, their mission is to empower founders with the tools, technology, and mentorship they need to scale. Partnering with the Government of Telangana allows them to bring the full stack of Google support to this ecosystem – from AI capabilities on Google Cloud to Android, Play, Ads and broader developer and startup programs.

Abu Dhabi delegation deepens trade ties with India

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Abu Dhabi economic delegation, led by the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED), has concluded its visit to India and Singapore, signing agreements and exploring opportunities to strengthen partnerships in various sectors as part of the emirate's ongoing endeavours to cement its position as a global magnet for talent, businesses, and investments.

The delegation engaged in high-level meetings with top government officials, businesses leaders, and investors in Mumbai and Singapore, exploring opportunities in key sectors including life sciences, pharma, AI, digital infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, and financial services.

"Our visit to Singapore and India comes as we continue to strengthen ties with top trade partners and economic powerhouses around the globe, and lead conversations addressing trends and transformations to ensure a brighter future for our people," ADDED Chairman Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi said.

"In 2024, Singapore's investments in Abu Dhabi rose 25%, with focus on manufacturing, education, construction, and professional, scientific, and technical activities, while Indian companies operating in the emirate saw a 31% rise during the same period," he added.

Five MoUs were signed by Abu Dhabi entities with Indian partners to enhance collaboration in startups, family businesses, logistics, manufacturing, and trade facilitation.

Uber forays into B2B logistics

BENGALURU, DHNS: Uber has entered the B2B logistics space with Uber Direct, launched in partnership with the the Centre's Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

The service was unveiled in Bengaluru on Wednesday by Prabhjeet Singh, president, Uber India and South Asia.

Customers can place orders on a seller's app or website, and Uber Direct will handle the delivery without any interaction with them until the delivery partner arrives.

This differs from Uber Courier, which lets users place orders directly within the Uber app. "The product has gone live in Bengaluru today... with drivers fulfilling grocery deliveries for Zepto and KPN Farm Fresh. It will expand to food deliveries in a couple of weeks, fulfilling deliveries for KFC, Burger King, Taco Bell and Rebel Foods," the company said.

Rupee falls 7 paise against US dollar

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee depreciated 7 paise to close at 89.94 against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking a negative trend in domestic equities and sustained foreign fund outflows.

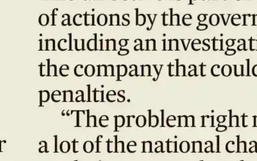
Forex traders said investors are in a wait-and-watch mode, awaiting clarity from the US Federal Reserve before taking decisive positions.

Investors are also awaiting cues from the US-India trade talks, which could boost the rupee in the coming days.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 90.00, then fell to an intra-day low of 90.10 against the US dollar and finally settled for the day at 89.94, down 7 paise from its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee settled up 18 paise at 89.87 against the US dollar.

Silver surges Rs 11,500 amid strong global cues

NEW DELHI, PTI: Silver prices saw the steepest single-day surge in nearly two months and skyrocketed by Rs 11,500 to scale a fresh peak of Rs 1,92,000 per kg in the national capital on Wednesday, amid robust domestic demand fuelled by global cues.



According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal closed at Rs 1,80,500 per kg on Tuesday, and gained Rs 11,500 on Wednesday in the local retail markets. So far this year, silver prices have added Rs 1,02,300, or 114.04%, from Rs 89,700 per kg on December 31, 2024.

Earlier, such a steep single-day rise in silver price was recorded on October 10 this year, when the rate went up by Rs 8,500 to Rs 1,71,500 per kg.

Meanwhile, the price of gold of 99.9% purity climbed Rs 800 on Wednesday to Rs 1,32,400 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of Rs 1,31,600 per 10 grams.

In the international market, spot gold was trading 0.16% lower at $4,201.70 per ounce. Spot silver climbed by 1.53% to hit a record high of $61.60.

CONCENTRATION OF CONTROL

IndiGo crisis shows perils of India's corporate dominance

BLOOMBERG

Flight chaos triggered by India's largest airline IndiGo in the past few days has raised questions about how an industry came to be dominated by one company, and the risks faced in other key sectors controlled by a few, powerful conglomerates.

IndiGo controls two-thirds of the country's domestic aviation market, operating about 2,200 flights daily. The budget airline failed to prepare in time for new government rules giving pilots more resting time, resulting in a shortage of crew last week. That caused the airline to cancel about 3,000 flights in the span of a few days, impacting half a million travellers, and wiping out billions from the company's stock value.

Opposition parties, industry experts and economists say IndiGo's fiasco highlights a deeper problem in the aviation sector about the concentration of control. IndiGo, with 65.6% market share, and its closest rival Air India Group with 25.7%, mean the industry operates as a near-duopoly, they say. In any industry where competition is limited, consumers tend to lose out because of higher prices, poorer service and the risk of failure.

"There's a huge consumer consequence to this, where the main people who suffer are ultimately the Indian consumers," said Rohit Chandra, assistant professor of public policy at the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi. "IndiGo brings that out front and centre."

The Opposition says the IndiGo turmoil is a result of market concentration, and the government should take stronger action to combat that kind of dominance.

"Monopoly kills competition," said Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka Chaturvedi, adding, "It has an unfair advantage. It takes away level-playing fields for new entrants."

The Centre acknowledges there's a problem of concentration in the sector, but has criticised the Opposition for politicising the matter. On Tuesday, the Aviation Minister said it was using its policies to encourage more airlines to enter the market, without elaborating on what those measures are. The sector has room for at least five big airlines, he said.

The fast-expanding aviation industry has been hailed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a symbol of India's growing economy and middle-class. The number of airports in India has more than doubled since Modi came to power in 2014, with the number of air passengers growing 10-12% a year.

The domination of India's two airlines is a far cry from a decade ago, when more than nine players shared the market. IndiGo led with just 36.8% at the time.

That all changed over time as several airlines collapsed because of over-ambitious growth plans and financial and supply-chain challenges. IndiGo's growth was organic, while rivals Kingfisher Airlines, Jet Airways, and GoAir all folded between 2012 and 2023. Financial troubles continue to dog India's third-largest domestic airline, SpiceJet.

IndiGo didn't respond to an email requesting further information. Chief Executive Officer Pieter Elbers said in a video message on Tuesday that the airline has stabilised operations and is working with the government on next steps.

Conglomerates' share

Elsewhere in India's economy, a handful of conglomerates dominate in key industries. Reliance Group's Jio controlled 40.7% of the market share in telecommunications, as of March 2025. The Adani Group controls more than 20% of India's ports capacity, second only to the government, and is also the largest airport operator with a market share of 23% in passengers in 2024.

Former RBI deputy governor Viral Acharya estimated in a 2023 paper that the top five conglomerates — Reliance, Tata Group, Aditya Birla Group, Adani, and Bharti Telecom — made up almost 18% of total assets in the non-financial sector in 2021. That's up from 10% in 1991.

Brajesh Singh, a senior adviser at management consultancy Arthur D. Little, said it was common practice the world over for industries to consolidate, but it's the responsibility of authorities to guard against market dominance. "From the rules and regulations perspective, the government shouldn't allow more than a sizable pie of the kitty," he said. There has to be a "limitation that you can't take more than 25-30% of the market share," he added. "That has not happened."

For now, consumers will continue to bear the brunt of the fallout from the IndiGo chaos. India's aviation regulator on Tuesday ordered the airline to cut flights by 10% to stabilise its operations. The directive is part of a suite of actions by the government, including an investigation into the company that could result in penalties.

"The problem right now is that a lot of the national champions are being created at the cost of domestic consumers," said Chandra. "Ultimately, the government can regulate its way out of these things by encouraging more entry."

An ancient rock beneath Bengaluru

The Peninsular Gneiss at the Lalbagh Botanical Garden in Bengaluru.

The 3.4-billion-year-old Peninsular Gneiss of Lalbagh bears the imprints of earth's earliest crust, centuries of human history and the evolution of Bengaluru, writes

Udaya Kumar P L

In the vibrant heart of Bengaluru, a city famous for its silicon chips and software code, stands a monument to a far deeper past: a 3.4-billion-year-old rock. It predates the digital age, the city's temples and even life itself. Rising from the greenery of Lalbagh Botanical Garden, this sprawling, humped mass of grey stone is the legendary Peninsular Gneiss (pronounced Peninsular "nice"). For morning joggers and tourists, it is a scenic viewpoint. But to a geologist, it is a piece of the earth's earliest crust — older than the Himalayas, the dinosaurs and even atmospheric oxygen.

The Lalbagh Rock is estimated to be between 3.0 and 3.4 billion years old. Considering the earth is about 4.5 billion years old, this silent giant has existed for nearly three-quarters of our planet's history. It formed during the Archean Eon, when the earth was a hostile world with a toxic atmosphere and raging volcanic activity.

Geologists determine the age of such ancient rocks using microscopic zircon crystals — durable time capsules that hold reliable radiometric signatures. In 1975, recognising its scientific value, the Geological Survey of India declared the Lalbagh outcrop a National Geological Monument. Unlike other ancient formations such as the Acasta Gneiss in Canada or the Jack Hills zircons in Australia, this one sits in the middle of a bustling metropolitan city, making it one of the world's most accessible windows into deep time.

Visitors often mistake the rock for granite but its story is far more dramatic. Granite forms from slowly cooling magma whereas gneiss is a metamorphic rock, one that has been transformed under immense pressure and heat.

Billions of years ago, this rock lay buried kilometres deep and endured temperatures above 600°C. Geologists describe its transformation using a "dough-kneading" analogy: light minerals like quartz and darker ones like mica were stretched, squeezed, folded and baked, forming the parallel layers we see today. Stand close and you can spot these gneissic bands — swirls of black and white that freeze the earth's early violence in stone.

The gneiss in Bengaluru is one of the world's most accessible windows into deep time. DH PHOTOS BY PUSHKAR V

While the rock was changing internally, the land beneath Bengaluru was travelling across the planet. Today the city lies at about 13° North. But around 300 million years ago, this chunk of continental crust was part of the supercontinent Gondwana, positioned near 70° South, close to the Antarctic Circle.

Through the slow, relentless motion of tectonic plates, this ancient landmass drifted northward over several thousand kilometres, eventually colliding with Asia and contributing to the rise of the Himalayas. This means the rock in Lalbagh has travelled farther than most of us ever will — crossing the entire Southern Hemisphere to reach its present home.

Layers of human history

The rock's story is not only geological. It has also been a silent witness to human life for thousands of years. In 1932, excavations near the stone quarries east of the outcrop uncovered prehistoric burial sites. Among the finds were large pottery urns with distinctive "elephantine legs" — bulbous, rounded projections at the base of the vessels — pointing to a unique local burial practice that flourished in the shadow of this ancient hillock.

The story continues into medieval times. At the base of the hill, near the western approach, stands a 15th–16th century Veeramasti hero-stone. Unlike the warrior Veeragallu, a Veeramasti memorial commemorates a solemn, voluntary act in which a wife chose to end her life after her husband's death. Its presence shows that the rock remained culturally significant across centuries, serving as a backdrop not only to prehistoric communities but also to medieval social rituals.

Fragile ecosystem

Despite its appearance as a massive boulder, the Lalbagh rock supports a fragile ecosystem. Fine crevices trap soil, allowing hardy grasses, mosses and rare lichens to grow. The slopes host the colourful Peninsular rock agama, a lizard that blends perfectly into the grey gneiss. Lichens on the rock also act as natural indicators of air quality.

Unfortunately, this ecosystem is easily damaged. Graffiti chemically etches the ancient surface, and plastic waste disrupts micro-habitats that took centuries to form.

The Peninsular Gneiss of Lalbagh is truly Bengaluru's eternal foundation. In a city that changes every day, this ancient rock remains constant, a reminder of nature's resilience and the profound depths of earth's history.

As citizens, protecting this National Geological Monument is our responsibility. When we climb it, sit on it or watch the city skyline from its summit, we are standing on billions of years of memory. With care and respect, this ancient witness will continue telling Bengaluru's story for generations to come.

(The author is Honorary Project Director, The Mythic Society, Bengaluru)

FEEDBACK
Send your ideas and comments to: spectrum@deccanherald.co.in

Celebrating 50 years of Panchama

Dayananda writes about a fortnightly newspaper that ignited a cultural movement and provided a political and philosophical framework for several literary titans

The early 1970s were a crucible of change for Karnataka and for India as a whole. Amidst the political turbulence of the Emergency, land reforms and the *Boosa Chalavali* (a Dalit-led movement sparked after a minister called Kannada literature "*boosa*" or cattle fodder), a new consciousness was awakening among Dalit and other marginalised communities. In this charged atmosphere, the Dalit community sought avenues to assert their identity and rights. It was in this context that the fortnightly newspaper *Panchama* was born on December 6, 1975. This publication would later become the soul of the Dalit movement in Karnataka.

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Panchama, a fortnightly newspaper, aimed for total social transformation and the annihilation of caste.

The story of *Panchama* began in a mixture of frustration and hope. Following a failed attempt to unite various Dalit factions in Mysuru in October 1975, a group of young activists decided to proactively address the situation. On December 6 (the death anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar), they launched a newspaper named *Shoshita*, The Exploited. Within a few months, it was renamed *Panchama*, with an aim to spread the Dalit movement and Ambedkar's ideas.

In its early days, *Panchama* was published from Mysuru before relocating to Bengaluru. Indudhara Honnapura served as its founding editor, Devanura Mahadeva as managing editor and H Govindaiah as publisher.

The editorial team included Ramadev Raake, Shivaji Ganeshan and Shivamallu Devanuru. Over the years, the paper saw changes in its editorial leadership, publisher and team, but its spirit remained steadfast.

For the next 15 years (1975–1990), *Panchama* was more than a newspaper; it was a cultural movement. At a time when several big media houses either ignored Dalits or viewed them with pity, *Panchama* broke the silence.

It became the perfect platform for Dalits and other marginalised communities to express their pain, anger, experiences of untouchability and creativity without hesitation.

Inspired by Ambedkarite ideology, the paper aimed for total social transformation and the annihilation of caste. It became a fearless chronicler of injustice, documenting atrocities, social boycotts and violence in villages like Kolar's Hunasikatte and Tumakuru's Dasanapura, while exposing the negligence of the government.

The paper gave rise to a new Dalit aesthetic, championing the belief that lived experience is the truest source of knowledge.

It provided a political and philosophical framework for literary titans such as Devanura Mahadeva, Dr Siddalingaiah, H Govindaiah, K B Siddaiah, Kotiganahalli Ramaiah and others. Crucially, it connected caste struggles with class issues, standing against capitalism and feudalism and advocating for labourers and poor farmers in the pursuit of a democratic and casteless society.

Devanura Mahadeva recalls a moment of pride: "Kuvempu used to read *Panchama*. Whenever an issue was delayed due to our financial constraints, he would summon Tejaswi (Kuvempu's son) and ask, 'Why hasn't the paper arrived?' Tejaswi would come to us and say, 'If Anna (Kuvempu) doesn't read *Panchama*, he feels something is missing.' Tejaswi even helped us financially. The very fact that Kuvempu read our paper was a tremendous honour."

Despite financial constraints and changes in leadership, *Panchama* left an indelible mark. Although it eventually ceased publication in 1990, its spirit continues to inspire. Today, its legacy is being revived through plays like *Panchama Pada* and other cultural activities that rediscover the songs, articles and messages of resistance that were published in the *Panchama*.

Half a century later, *Panchama* stands as a powerful testament to the impact a small, committed publication can have in shaping history, altering literature and giving a roaring voice to the voiceless.

(The writer is a Kannada author and journalism faculty)

Kolar's lifelines, restored by women

A lake rejuvenation drive in the district has given fresh momentum to agriculture, livelihoods and the local economy, writes

K Onkar Murthy

Kolar district, once home to more than 4,500 tanks, has seen its lifelines dwindle to barely around 2,500 over the decades, leaving fields parched and farmers desperate. Encroachments and prolonged neglect have rendered vast stretches of farmland barren, forcing many villagers to migrate to Bengaluru in search of work.

A similar crisis prevailed in O Mittur gram panchayat in Mulabagilu taluk in 2017. Lakes and tanks ran dry and borewells drilled as deep as 1,500 feet yielded no water. Safe drinking water was hard to come by. The Koramangala–Challaghatta (KC) Valley project, which supplies treated wastewater to recharge groundwater in drought-prone areas, along with sporadic rains, offered some relief. Yet a large part of the panchayat continued to reel under drought-like conditions, as local water bodies lacked the capacity to store water.

This grim reality deeply troubled S Asha of Minijenahalli under O Mittur gram panchayat. As a member of an NGO working on rural development, she had travelled across Kolar and knew the ground situation well.

"Born and brought up in the rain-rich landscapes of Thirthahalli in Shivamogga district, I moved to the dry plains of Kolar after marriage. I soon realised that my gram panchayat suffered severe water scarcity despite having several lakes and kalyanis — most of them choked with silt. Initiating desilting through rural employment schemes came with its own challenges. I felt we had to protect every available source of water," she said.

Driven by this conviction, Asha founded Arohana Grameenabhivruddi Samsthe, a women-led organisation focused on water, soil, and green initiatives, in December 2018.

Women construct a canal in O Mittur gram panchayat in Kolar district; A rejuvenated kalyani at Pichaguntlahalli. DH PHOTOS

Drawing inspiration from Gandhian ideals of *Grama Swaraj* and guided by the belief that "strengthening tanks strengthens villages and the nation," Arohana set out to revive waterbodies long considered dead. With guidance from water expert Vishwanath S of Biome Environmental Trust, Asha mapped 26 lakes in the gram panchayat and prepared a comprehensive revival plan.

Funding, however, proved to be a major hurdle.

"Development requires donors," said Asha. "We approached at least 12–15 local companies with our proposal, but none responded. Eventually, a couple of Bengaluru-based companies visited the area and decided to support us under corporate social responsibility (CSR)."

After two years of groundwork — raising funds, planning operations, mobilising villagers and securing gram panchayat permissions — Arohana began desilting the inlet and outlet channels of a lake in Pichaguntlahalli in 2021–22.

"It was not easy, but we remained focused on our goal of preserving these lakes for future generations," Asha recalled.

Over the past four years, Arohana has desilted 14 lakes, four kalyanis, six wells and around 10 inlet and outlet channels across 13 villages in O Mittur and neighbouring Angondahalli gram panchayats.

"We first mark the lake boundaries and divide the lake area into modules based on technical details and suggestions of localities. Large lakes require excavators, while small waterbodies and channels are desilted by local workers, especially women. The nutrient-rich silt is then given free to farmers for use on their fields or for non-commercial purposes like laying approach roads," Asha explained.

One module equals 10,000 cubic metre of lake area and desilting a module takes at least 15 days with two excavators operating for a minimum of 10 hours a day. So far, more than 48,000 tractor-loads of silt have been distributed to over 400 farmers. The group's supervisor ensures that none of it is diverted to commercial enterprises such as brick kilns.

Women empowered

Arohana's most striking achievement is the dignity and financial independence it brings to rural women. Led by a seven-member all-women board, the organisation employs local women for most of the desilting work, providing them with Rs 500 a day along with meals.

The rejuvenated tanks have revived local economies as well. Fishing rights are now auctioned, providing a source of steady revenue to the gram panchayat.

"Desilting has significantly increased our lake's water-holding capacity. Every cubic metre desilted adds 1,000 litres of storage. The panchayat now earns from fishing rights and farmers around the lake benefit greatly. Such work should happen in every village," said Venkataramana, a member of the O Mittur gram panchayat.

The results are visible. In Pichaguntlahalli, where only a handful of farmers once grew paddy, 58 farmers now cultivate two crops a year.

"When the group approached us, we visited the site and immediately recognised the need. Arohana used our CSR funds effectively, benefiting farmers and villagers. We will continue to support such initiatives," said Tejaswini of Val Tech, Bengaluru.

Nurturing green habits

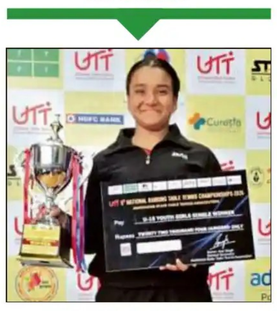
Beyond tank revival, Arohana promotes a culture of sustainability. With support from corporate donors, it has sponsored the education of 50 girls, set up computer labs, provided books and school materials, supplied play equipment to anganwadis and distributed tailoring machines. Women-led financial literacy camps and awareness drives have encouraged community participation in ward and gram sabha meetings.

Every woman in the gram panchayat is encouraged to plant two fruit saplings in front of her home, and today, 1,225 households are nurturing plants. Many lakes are being developed as bird habitats through afforestation along their banks. Rainwater harvesting systems have been installed in four high schools and eight homes as models to promote water conservation. These efforts have not gone unnoticed. Arohana has received multiple recognitions.

Despite scepticism and gendered mockery in the early days, the team has persevered with determination. Today, their work stands as a model for the entire Kolar region, proving that with vision, commitment and collective action, women can restore waterbodies and transform communities.

(Translated from Kannada by Divyashri Mudakavi)

IN BRIEF



Tanishka wears under-15 crown

▸ Karnataka's Tanishka Kalbhairav **(in pic)** blanked West Bengal's Ahona Ray 11-6, 11-7, 11-8 to clinch the under-15 title in the Ranchi National-ranking table tennis tournament, reports DHNS from Bengaluru.

Raghunath scores 4 goals

▸ Former India player Raghunath VR scored four goals as Hockey Ballari crushed Sports Authority of India Training Centre A 11-2 in the Hockey Karnataka Namdhari Cup on Wednesday, reports DHNS.

Results: South Western Railway, Hubballi: 5 (Vinith 13th, Veeranna G Patil 27th, Shamanth CS 33rd, 35th, Pavan Madivalar 51st) bt Dept of Youth Empowerment & Sports B: 3 (Gaurav Ganapathy KR 42nd, Srinivas Thalwar 46th, Prem Kumar SS 52nd); Hockey Ballari: 11 (SV Sunil 4th, 56th, Pranam Gowda 8th, Raghunath VR 11th, 19th, 44th, 53rd, Hampaiah 12th, 34th, Nagarjun Reddy 26th, SK Uthappa 58th) bt Sports Authority of India Training Centre A: 2 (Naeemuddin 27th, 47th).

Amul extends Argentina football deal

MUMBAI, PTI: Domestic dairy brand Amul on Wednesday said it has extended partnership with the FIFA World Champions -- Argentina Football Association (AFA) -- as the Official Regional Sponsor for one more season.

In their fourth year of association, AFA confirmed Amul's alliance with the Argentina team during the World Cup 2026 period, Amul said in a statement.

Amul is the first Indian regional sponsor in the history of Argentine Football since 2022.

"With great enthusiasm we announce today the extension of AMUL, a historic Indian company, and our first regional sponsor in India in this fourth consecutive extension. Being the first regional sponsors of the Argentine Football Association in that country, their confidence is a symbol of our team growth and passion in India," AFA President Claudio Fabian Tapia said.

Gulati slays Talwar

BENGALURU, DHNS: Fancied Sundeep Gulati came up with a brilliant show en route to a 5-1 annihilation of giant-killer Sumit Talwar in the fourth round of the Joy Heyball International Open in Chandigarh on Wednesday.

Also advancing to the knockouts were the formidable Shivam Arora, Keerthana Pandian, among others.

Select results (Round 4, Indians unless mentioned): Sundeep Gulati bt Sumit Talwar 5-1; Shivam Arora bt Anmoldeep Singh 5-0; Keerthana Pandian bt Vaibhav Dhamija 5-1; Satnam Singh bt Chandan Gulati 5-0; Mohd El Molla (Egy) bt Rajat Khaneja 5-0; David Anderson (RSA) bt Ketan Sabhachandani 5-1.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

Second T20I: India vs South Africa **(7 pm). LIVE** on **Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar.**

Second Test: New Zealand vs West Indies **(Day 3, 3:30 am on Friday). LIVE** on **Sony Sports Ten 5 & FanCode.**

FOOTBALL

Europa League: GNK Dinamo vs Real Betis, Midtjylland vs Genk, Utrecht vs Nottingham Forest **(all 11:15 pm)**; Celtic vs AS Roma, Basel vs Aston Villa, Lyon vs Go Ahead Eagles **(all 1:30 am on Friday). LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

HOCKEY

FIH Pro League: Argentina vs Netherlands **(men, 3:30 am)**; Argentina vs Germany **(women, 6 am)**; Belgium vs England **(men, 5 pm)**; Ireland vs England **(women, 7:30 pm). LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 1 & JioHotstar.**

CRICKET 2ND T20I

Spotlight on leaders Surya, Gill

India seek another stirring show against South Africa

MULLANPUR (PUNJAB), PTI

Yet to stamp his authority in the shortest format, Shubman Gill would be eying major gains on home soil when a well-rounded India look to extend their dominance over South Africa in the second T20 International here on Thursday.

With only a travel day separating the first two games of the five-match series, Gill won't mind getting straight into the middle in search of a substantial knock.

India steamrolled South Africa in the series opener but the middling returns from Gill, since his T20 comeback in Asia Cup back in September, remains a talking point.

Following an impressive debut as Test captain in the UK, Gill was brought back into the T20 setup. Even though Sanju Samson and his Punjab teammate Abhishek Sharma were doing the job at the top of the order, the team management showed immense faith in Gill's abilities as a T20 opener. The batter from Kerala was displaced and he has since then struggled to find a place in the playing eleven.

The Test and ODI captain can seamlessly perform the role that Virat Kohli performed for India till the T20 World Cup last year but the team, with batting options till number eight, has doubled down on its fearless approach since the triumph in Barbados, leaving little room for an anchor.

Gill certainly can't go hammer and tongs like Abhishek Sharma in the powerplay and therefore needs to figure out what works best for him.

Besides Gill, captain Suryakumar Yadav, who has failed to find consistency over the past 12 months, is also facing additional scrutiny.

A couple of months down the line, Suryakumar would be leading India's World Cup defence at home and considering the added responsibility, the flow of runs from his bat form a crucial piece of the puzzle heading into the ICC showpiece.

In the colder environment of New Chandigarh, India are unlikely to tinker with the winning combination. Returning to national duty from injury, Hardik Pandya reaffirmed his status as the leading all-rounder in the game.

His 28-ball 59 made a massive difference on a sticky wicket while it took him one ball to make an impact with the ball.

The selection on Tuesday also indicated that two strike bowlers, Arshdeep Singh and Kuldeep Yadav, will not be part of the same eleven due to the need for batting till number eight. Arshdeep got the nod on this occasion and India's leading wicket-taker in the format was once again able to provide the early wickets bowling alongside Jasprit Bumrah.

South Africa, on the other hand, would be looking for a drastically better outing with the bat after being bundled out for 74 in the run chase of 176.

There is no time to reflect on the scale of the defeat and that can only be a good thing for the visitors.

"Nowadays in T20 cricket, there's not much time to look around and absorb. But the biggest factor was obviously not being able to build partnerships, settling after losing wickets and getting some momentum on our side. So yeah, we'll have brief conversations," said skipper Aiden Markram.

The returning Shubman Gill, who managed only four runs in the opening T20I, would be eyeing a big knock in the second game against South Africa in Mullanpur on Thursday. AFP

'Rockstar' Pandya hogs limelight on return

CUTTACK, PTI: India's ace all-rounder Hardik Pandya feels a positive mindset has helped him return to the ground "stronger, bigger and better" after injury setbacks and believes he has become a more confident player by trusting his skill-sets.

Pandya's return from a nearly two-month layoff due to a left quadriceps injury propelled India to a massive 101-run win against South Africa in the opening T20I in Cuttack on Tuesday.

The 32-year-old all-rounder blazed to an unbeaten 28-ball 59 and 1/16 with the ball as he announced his return to the side after suffering the injury during the Asia Cup.

"My mindset was really about coming back stronger, bigger, better. Injuries test you mentally, and at the same point in time, it kind of puts a lot of doubts... and a lot of credit to the loved ones," said Pandya in a video posted on bcci.tv.

Hardik Pandya returned from his latest injury with a bang, smashing a 28-ball 59 not out and picking up a wicket in the opening T20I against South Africa on Tuesday. AFP

"I've stood strong, I've done a lot of things with grace and that has helped me to become even more confident, back myself and really trust my skillset... I really believe in myself as a player. I've always believed that if you don't believe in yourself, how would others believe you?" Pandya, who will be a key member in India's T20 World Cup campaign in two months, added.

The cricketer said that he is someone who derives confidence from within and doesn't bother too much about what others think about him.

"I think I have been a very honest, very real person in life as well, which has helped me a lot. I don't really sugarcoat a lot of things in my life. It's never about the other person; it's never about how others think or how others perceive. It's always about how I feel inside."

Pandya says he derives his energy from the crowd, which helps him live up to the expectations.

"You should be a rockstar. You come, perform for 10 minutes, and the crowd goes berserk. I think that has been the biggest motivation for me."

Glanders? NRCE requests more samples of nine horses from BTC

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Racing at the Bangalore Turf Club will continue to remain suspended this Winter Season after the National Research Centre on Equines (NRCE) in Hisar, Haryana requested another set of samples of nine horses while clearing 11 others of the deadly glanders disease.

Early this month, the Government Veterinary Hospital in Hebbal found five horses at the BTC with possible glanders infection which forced the club to send around 20 samples to the NRCE. The test reports arrived on Wednesday with NRCE asking BTC to send another batch of nasal swabs and serum samples of nine horses for additional investigation.

"We sent 20 samples to NRC in Hisar because they are the nodal agency for determining the outbreak of any zoonotic or any epidemic related to animals in the country. And of the 20 samples we sent them, 11 were declared as negative, which means those horses were found not to have glanders. For the nine horses, they have requested for us to do the collection of samples in triplicate once again," BTC steward Shankar Balu told *DH*.

Racing at the Bangalore Turf Club continues to be in limbo after NRCE has requested samples of nine horses to be sent again for additional testing. DH FILE PHOTO

When asked if the nine horses tested positive for glanders (an infectious and life-threatening disease caused by the bacterium Burkholderia mallei that mainly affects horses, donkeys or mules), Balu said the NRCE has just asked for another round of testing.

"We would be sending the triplicate samples soon. See, in Bengaluru, they did something called the ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) test. There is another test which is known as the Complement Fixation Test (CFT) test, which also needs to be done in these situations. The CFT test takes much longer than the Elisa test," said Balu.

"So, until we hear back from them, we would like to reserve any judgment on the matter because very firmly the ball is in the court of the nodal agency. We are also keen, obviously, to kill the suspense around the whole matter."

Balu, meanwhile, said BTC is taking every possible precaution to ensure the safety of around 800 horses as well as syces at its stables. "All suspect horses are being kept isolated very far away from the other horses in the underground stables. The syces are also quarantined, because this can also spread to humans. All necessary precautions are being taken. Everything that needed to be done was done at the right time."

Veterans Rohit, Kohli scale to the top of ODI rankings

DUBAI, PTI: India great Virat Kohli's push to regain the top ODI batter spot received a boost as he moved up to the second place in the latest ICC rankings released on Wednesday.

Kohli hasn't held the No.1 position for ODI batters since he was displaced by Pakistan's Babar Azam in April 2021. But the right-hander is closing in on the top spot following his superb recent efforts for India in the three-match ODI series against South Africa.

The 37-year-old was adjudged Player of the Series for his 302 runs across the three matches and he was duly rewarded on the latest set of rankings as he improved two places to second overall behind teammate Rohit Sharma.

Rohit amassed 146 runs across the series to hold on to his spot at the top of the rankings, with Kohli closing to within eight rating points on the back of his unbeaten innings of 65 not out in the series finale in Visakhapatnam.

Rohit Sharma (left) and Virat Kohli.

India ODI skipper Shubman Gill retained his fifth spot despite missing the three-match series while stand-in skipper KL Rahul rose two places to 12th overall after making two fifties in the rubber.

Left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav moved up three spots to third in the bowlers' chart.

South Africa trio of Quinton de Kock (up three rungs to 13th), Aiden Markram (up four places to 25th) and Temba Bavuma (up three spots to 37th) also made gains on the rankings for ODI batters.

Long jumpers kill WA's 'take-off zone' plans

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

A couple of years ago, World Athletics thought it had found a clever fix for one of long jump's most frustrating problems: the endless stream of foul jumps.

The idea was simple on paper -- replace the unforgiving take-off board with a 40-centimetre "take-off zone" and measure the jump from wherever the athlete actually leaves the ground. This wasn't a random brainstorm either as WA first floated the idea in early 2024 and pushed it into proper testing a year later, hoping it would modernise the event without changing its spirit.

Early numbers from those trials suggest they might be onto something. The foul rate, usually hovering around a hefty one-third of all attempts, dropped to nearly a third of that during the test events of the last indoor season.

Fans didn't mind it either as spectator feedback leaned marginally in favour of the new format. For a while, it genuinely looked like the long jump was headed for a quiet revolution. But numbers were one thing and athletes are another.

That's where the idea began to unravel. India's Murali Sreeshankar, one of the top long jumpers from the country and a key participant in WA's athletes meeting, recalled how the discussions went while speaking to *DH*.

"They (WA) called all the long jumpers around the globe for a virtual meeting almost two years ago, I was part of it as well, and everyone was against it," said the reigning CWG and Asian Games silver medallist. "The reason why the jumpers were not convinced because long jump is a technical event and with the broader board coming in, you take away the beauty of the event. Long jump is a skill-based event and you have to show precision with your run.

Murali Sreeshankar felt long jumpers were not too convinced about the now-scrapped take-off zone.

"The main purpose of bringing the change was to reduce the number of fouls and have bigger jumps. The number of fouls did reduce at trial events but there weren't many big jumps happening."

Globally, Sreeshankar wasn't alone. Olympic champion Miltiadis Tentoglou didn't mince words as he publicly blasted the proposal and even went as far as saying he'd quit long jump if the rule ever became permanent. When athletes of that stature dig their heels in, any reform is already on shaky ground.

Anju Bobby George, long jump legend and AFI senior official, offered a slightly different angle. For her, the resistance wasn't just about numbers or mechanics, but emotion.

"Accuracy is the key for long jump. I missed many big jumps because of the number of fouls I committed in my career," said India's first-ever World Championships medallist. "That's the beauty of the event, the unpredictability, because when we fly far, the first thing in a jumper's mind is 'did I overstep the line?' The curiosity is among the fans too.

"See every event in track and field, World Athletics is trying to bring positive changes. However, what I feel didn't work is people's ability to accept change. Jumpers who are able to jump far with the old rules, are unlikely to complain but those who make fouls, they will prefer the change; it depends on people's perspective."

Eventually, WA read the room and backed off as the take-off zone is now shelved indefinitely. In the end, even well-intentioned ideas struggle when they tamper with what athletes consider the essence of their craft.

BCCI AGM: Kohli, Rohit's contracts to be discussed

MUMBAI, PTI: A revision of contracts for Indian superstars Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, along with those of women players in domestic cricket, will be discussed during the Annual General Meeting of the BCCI's apex council on December 22.

The 31st AGM of the apex council will be held online, where decisions are expected on the contracts of Kohli and Rohit, both of whom have retired from Tests and T20Is over the past year and now feature only in ODI cricket.

Gill in A-plus

In that context, India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill could be placed in the A-plus category, alongside senior all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who was appointed vice-captain for the last Test assignment, and ace fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah.

Among other matters, a revision in payments for umpires and match referees, along with an update on the board's digital properties will also be discussed.

It will be the first AGM of the apex council since changes among officials in the BCCI, with Mithun Manhas becoming the board's president and Raghuram Bhatt named treasurer in September, while Devajit Saikia and Prabhtej Singh Bhatia were appointed as secretary and joint secretary.

NZ rally after Tickner body blow

WELLINGTON, AFP: New Zealand fought back to claim first-day honours in the second Test against the West Indies in Wellington, but the home side suffered a blow when seam bowler Blair Tickner was taken to hospital with a nasty shoulder injury.

New Zealand were 24-0 at the close of play after bowling the West Indies out for 205 in 75 overs.

Tickner was the pick of the New Zealand bowlers, taking 4-32 from 16 overs, but his day ended prematurely when he tumbled onto his shoulder while fielding and left on a stretcher.

Medical staff from the West Indies and Black Caps camps rushed to Tickner's aid and after some worrying moments eventually he sat up before being taken away to an ambulance.

New Zealand Cricket said he had suffered a left shoulder injury. "It was pretty awful to see," said wicketkeeper Mitch Hay, playing in his first Test having replaced Tom Blundell who was injured in the first Test.

Brief scores: West Indies: 205 all out in 75 overs (John Campbell 44, Brandon King 33, Shai Hope 48, Roston Chase 29; Michael Rae 3-67, Blair Tickner 4-32) vs New Zealand: 24/0 in 9 overs.

Manikanth's double ton floors Odisha

BENGALURU, DHNS: Manikanth Shivanand scored a double century to give Karnataka a huge first innings lead of 242 runs on Day 2 against Odisha in their ongoing elite group match of the Cooch Behar Trophy in Balangir on Wednesday.

Resuming the day on 50/1 after bundling out Odisha for mere 170, Karnataka batted the entire day with little trouble as Manikanth Shivanand (227 runs, 13x4, 7x6) had a big 223-run stand with opener Dhruv Krishnan, who belted a 193-ball 105 (13 fours).

While Odisha bowlers were blasted all around the Gandhi Stadium, Priyanshu Mohanty claimed both the big scalps of the day but not before Manikanth had another big stand of 169 runs with skipper Anvay Dravid, who is batting at 62 not out.

Brief scores: Odisha: 170 all out vs Karnataka: (O/n: 50/1): 412/3 in 107 overs (Dhruv Krishnan 105, Manikanth Shivanand 227, Anvay Dravid 62 n.o., Priyanshu Mohanty 2-73).

K1000 Rally maps fresh stages

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka Motor Sports Club (KMSC) has unveiled a revamped and more demanding route for the 49th Karnataka 1000 Rally, the fourth round of the FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC), scheduled from December 12 to 14 around Tumakuru.

The event, India's longest-running rally, will feature nearly 50 per cent new gravel sections across Tumakuru and Gubbi taluk, combining high-speed stretches with narrow, technical segments and shifting surfaces.

The new layout is designed by long-time clerk of the course Bhaskar Gupta for a fair contest in the landmark 49th edition.

Ijas brace seals win for Empire FC

BENGALURU, DHNS: Muhammed Ijas scored goals in either side of the break to rally Empire FC to a 4-1 victory over MD Sporting FC in the BDFA A Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Wednesday.

MD Sporting took an early lead in the match through Bawanlum Lang Thang Khiew (9th). However, Iljas levelled the score three minutes from the half-hour mark and then came back after the break to score the winner at the 54th minute.

Results: Group A: Empire FC: 2 (Muhammed Ijas M 27th, 54th) bt MD Sporting FC: 1 (Bawanlum Lang Thang Khiew 9th); Vehicles FC: 1 (Athing Dang Sangtam L 78th) drew with Al Fateh FC: 1 (Zaib Sherief 3rd).

Group B: Young Blues Elite FC: 2 (Elroy Jacob Elvis 55th, G Prince Alwin 56th) bt Infinite Belagavi FC: 1 (Basavaraj Shrishail Baraker 56th).

HOCKEY JUNIOR WORLD CUP

Mighty Germany reign supreme

Europeans outlast spirited Spain to wear 8th crown

Germany players embrace their goalkeeper Jasper Ditzer (right) after his heroics in the shootout powered them past Spain in the final on Wednesday. PTI

HITA PRAKASH
CHENNAI, DHNS

Maiden finallists Spain had promised to put on a tough fight. Powerhouse Germany were hungry to grab hold of the trophy for an eighth time.

In what ensued at the final of the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup here at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium on Wednesday was a battle of equals though one team relied on heart and the other on muscle. Eventually, following a 1-1 tie at the end of full-time, Germany kept their emotions in check to score a 3-2 victory via shootout to leave Spain heart-broken but proud of their exploits.

Goalkeeper and the star of the world No. 1 side's campaign, Jasper Ditzer stole the limelight once again by saving three goals in the shootout. Though Spain got hold of the first point after both the teams missed their opening shots, Andres Medina stumbling in the fifth of the five chances (with Germany leading 3-2) saw Spain end as runners-up.

For the champion side, the win was proof of their dominance in the biggest hockey showpiece for age-group players in the world. For their European neighbours, the second-place trophy is an assurance of the sport heading in the right direction in a country that is madly in love with football.

Earlier, the match started off on a quiet note. With both sides matching each other's energy and taking their time to figure out each other's strengths and loopholes, the first quarter went goalless. The second quarter was lit up by Justus Warweg's field goal in the 26th minute that broke the deadlock and took Germany ahead before Nicolas Mustaros slotted in Spain's equaliser just after half-time in the 33rd minute.

Captain Ben Hasbach was in the right place at the right time to create one of the many opportunities that had come the Germans' way by then. Beating a group of swarming Spanish defenders around him, the 21-year-old found a tiny gap to push the ball to Warweg, whose reverse hit into the goal gave Germany their opener.

Heaving a sigh of relief, the Germans began attacking their opponents' circle more regularly. Having learnt from their mistake, Spain sharpened their defensive fort even as their forwards continued to trouble the opponents' backline.

Spanish coach Oriol Torras Puig's pass and play strategy finally bore fruit when a long pass from the left flank into the circle was received by Pablo Roman who fed the ball to Nicolas Mustaros. Steady wrist work resulted in an equaliser.

By the end of 60 minutes, Germany had a total of 16 circle penetrations and three penalty corners while Spain had breached the 'D' 15 times and earned five PCs. With little separating the two finallists, the balanced contest deserved a fitting finish. And Germany just about managed to stay an inch ahead to crown themselves again.

Result: Final: Germany: 3 (Justus Warweg 26th) bt Spain: 2 (Nicolas Mustaros 33rd) via shootout, FT: 1-1.

India rise late to seal bronze

Hosts rally to beat Argentina 4-2 to sign off on a high

HITA PRAKASH
CHENNAI, DHNS

Argentina were up and about early and had raced ahead in the bronze medal contest of the FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup here on Wednesday.

India, on the other hand, decided to wake up from their slumber only 49th minutes later. Jumping into action, the Rohit Yadav-led world No. 2 side played catch-up before whizzing past the South Americans to score a 4-2 victory for a third-place podium finish.

On yet another cool and breezy evening in the coastal city, a full house greeted the teams before a penalty stroke conversion by Nicolas Rodriguez in the third minute and a field goal by Santiago Fernandez in the 44th minute muted a stunned crowd.

As a feeling of deja vu began to set in, PR Sreejesh's boys appeared to have re-grouped in the second half to avoid themselves from enduring a second consecutive humbling. If Ankit Pal's deflection off a flick during a penalty corner in the 49th minute restored some life back into the Indian camp, Manmeet Singh's deflection off another drag-flick in the 52nd, Shardanand Tiwari's penalty stroke conversion (57th) and Anmol Ekka's drag-flick finding the net in the 58th minute saw the hosts end their topsy-turvy campaign with a medal around their necks.

Of the Indian colts, defender Ekka's spring in his legs and energy at crunch moments proved to be the inspiration his team-mates fed on to forge a comeback. And comeback they did and how!

Though the third-ranked team in the world paced away initially, Argentina were as sloppy and mistake-ridden as India. Sensing the lack of intent and reading the Tomas Ruiz-led side's hesitation despite enjoying a comfortable 2-0 lead, the Indian's began attacking and penetrating into the defence.

With the wheels beginning to move faster in the third quarter, it was the fourth quarter when India pressed hard on the accelerator to secure a much-needed win.

Result: Bronze-medal match: India: 4 (Ankit Pal 49th, Manmeet Singh 52nd, Shardanand Tiwari 57th, Anmol Ekka 58th) bt Argentina: 2 (Nicolas Rodriguez 3rd, Santiago Fernandez 44th).

Indian players celebrate after defeating Argentina in the bronze medal playoff match on Wednesday. PTI

Liverpool find solace at San Siro

Liverpool's Dominik Szoboszlai (right) celebrates after scoring the winner. AFP

PARIS, AFP

Liverpool snatched a 1-0 win away to Inter Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday without unsettled star Mohamed Salah, while Chelsea slipped to defeat against Atalanta and Barcelona overcame Eintracht Frankfurt. Dominik Szoboszlai scored a penalty as Liverpool snapped Inter's 18-game unbeaten home run.

Chelsea lost 2-1 at Atalanta despite taking a first-half lead through Joao Pedro. Gianluca Scamacca headed Atalanta level and Charles De Ketelaere smashed in the winner after HT.

Bayern came from behind to beat Sporting Lisbon 3-1 while Jules Kounde emerged as the unlikely hero for Barcelona as the France defender scored a pair in a 2-1 win over Eintracht.

Results: Kairat: 0 lt to Olympiacos: 1 (Martins 73rd); Bayern: 3 (Gnabry 65th, Karl 69th, Tah 77th) bt Sporting: 1 (Kimmich 54th og); Inter: 0 lt to Liverpool: 1 (Szoboszlai 88th); Barca: 2 (Kounde 50th, 53rd) bt Eintracht Frankfurt: 1 (Knauff 21st); Atalanta: 2 (Scamacca 55th, De Ketelaere 83rd) bt Chelsea: 1 (Joao Pedro 25th); Tottenham: 3 (Zima 26th og, Kudus 50th, Simons 79th) bt Slavia Prague: 0. PSV: 2 (Til 10th, Pepi 85th) lt to Atletico Madrid: 3 (Alvarez 37th, Hancko 52nd, Sorloth 56th); Monaco: 1 (Balogun 68th) bt Galatasaray: 0; USG: 2 (Khalaili 5th, 71st) lt to Marseille: 3 (Paixao 15th, Greenwood 41st, 58th).

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